REPORT RESUMES

ED 018 785 48 AL 001 162
READINGS IN SANGO. VOLUME II, BASIC COURSE IN SANGO.
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REPORT NUMBER BR-6-2286 PUB DATE 67
CONTRACT OEC-3-6-062286-1682
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.50 HC-$3.92 96P.

DESCRIPTORS- *SANGO, *READING MATERIALS, FOLK CULTURE, AFRICAN CULTURE, TAPE RECORDINGS, ANTHROPOLOGY,

INCLUDED IN THIS BOOK OF SANGO READINGS ARE 15 SHORT TEXTS SELECTED FROM A LARGE COLLECTION OF TAPE RECORDINGS MADE FOR THE AUTHOR'S SANGO GRAMMAR AND DICTIONARY PROJECT (SEE ED 003 925 AND ED 010 346). THE TEXTS WERE CHOSEN ON THE BASIS OF THE QUALITY OF THE RECORDING, THE CONTENT AND LENGTH OF THE TEXT, AND ITS SUITABILITY FOR THE LANGUAGE LEARNER. IT IS INTENDED THAT THESE READINGS BE USED WITH "VOLUME I, BASIC COURSE IN SANGO," AL 001 161, TO INCREASE THE STUDENT'S FAMILIARITY WITH GRAMMAR, VOCABULARY, AND SYNTAX. EACH READING IS PRESENTED FIRST IN REGULARIZED TRANSCRIPTION AND THEN IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION. GRAMMAR AND USAGE EXPLANATIONS FOLLOW EACH TEXT TO CALL THE STUDENT'S ATTENTION TO IMPORTANT POINTS AND TO EXPLAIN IRREGULARITIES. SHORT "QUESTION" AND "MODEL SENTENCE" SECTIONS PROVIDE DRILLS ON THE MATERIAL IN THE READING. THESE READINGS WERE TAKEN FROM EXTEMPORANEOUS RECORDINGS MADE BY CENTRAL AFRICAN SPEAKERS OF SANGO AND ARE PRIMARILY FOLKTALES, PERSONAL NARRATIVES, AND THE DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL CUSTOMS. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS TEXT AND CORRESPONDING TAPE RECORDINGS, CONTACT THE AUTHOR AT GRACE COLLEGE, P.O. BOX 397, WINONA LAKE, INDIANA 46590. (JD)

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ED018785

READINGS IN SANGO

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Volume 2

Basic Course in Sango

William J. Samarin

Associate Professor of Linguistics

1967

AL 001 162

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, under provisions of NDEA Title VI, Section 602, Public Law 85-864, as amended.

This first edition of Basic Course in Sango was produced in 140 copies of which 40 copies appear in the Hartford Studies in Linguistics (Hartford Seminary Foundation, 55 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, Connecticut, 06105). The rest are distributed by Grace College, P.O. Box 397, Winona Lake, Indiana, 46590 (in cooperation with the author).

It was not originally planned that these lessons be duplicated in fulfillment of the above-mentioned contract. However, to make them available for immediate use, it was finally decided to use the typescript in preparing Xerox plates for offset duplication. This decision accounts for the rather unsightly appearance of many of the pages, for which apologies are made.

READINGS IN SANGO

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INTRODUCTION

The following 15 texts are meant to be an integral part of the language learning material; they do not constitute a mere appendix to the graded lessons. They should be used as early as possible to increase the student's familiarity with the grammar, vocabulary and syntax of Sango. The English translation is provided to encourage this use. The following are some ways that the texts can be used.

1. Listen to the original tape-recordings of these texts to test one's comprehension and to practise mimicry of narrative style.

2. Translate as much of a text as one can alone and then check the translation with the one provided here.

3. Have Centralafricans retell each text to obtain more texts and to obtain variations in narrative style.

4. Students, or students and Centralafricans, can ask each other questions about the content of the texts. Centralafricans can also be asked for explanations and cultural information.

5. The texts should be retold as often as possible to gain fluency in speaking Sango uninterruptedly for several minutes at a time.

6. Members of a class can cooperate in the preparation

of a dictionary to better come to grips with the differences between Sango and English idiom.

Because these texts were given extemporaneously, they are sometimes a little disorganized, but perhaps not more so than man-on-the-street interviews in our own society. It is not always easy to determine what string of words constitutes a sentence. In some cases I have indicated other possibilities in the Notes. The texts are also sometimes not as interesting as one would have wished because of the tendency to ramble on the part of the speaker. The fables are especially disappointing. One hardly gets the point of a few of the stories because they are so abbreviated. It should be noted, however, that even in the native language of the speakers there appears to be little of the kind of style and eloquence that makes a sample of folklore good reading. I have yet to record a Gbeya fable that did not need a commentary to make it even intelligible. Besides, folklore does not appear to be told with the same zest in Sango as it is in the native languages. To my knowledge there is no folklore indigenous to Sango as a lingua franca, except for some dance songs.

These texts represent three categories: *A* for material primarily ethnological in nature; *F* for fables or other traditional folklore; and *N* for narratives of a more personal nature. The original code numbers are given so as to relate them to other work on the language. Some of these texts were used by Taber (1966) and myself (1966), but for different purposes: In the latter publication the readings are entirely different.

The texts were selected from the very large collection of tape-recordings made in 1962 for the grammar project. They were chosen on the basis of the quality of the recording and the content and length of the text itself; short texts were preferred over the long ones. These considerations had priority over factors such as age, sex, and ethnic and social background of the speaker. Although these were originally to have been used as criteria in selecting the texts, it was decided that the student's task of learning the language was more important than providing a wide spectrum of Sango readings. Nevertheless, there is an adequate representation, although there may be a few more Protestant speakers than one would have planned for. Seven people participated in the selection at various stages of the editing, among whom were four Centralafricans.

The tape-recordings themselves have not been edited. The transcription, on the other hand, is edited to the extent that the spelling has been standardized and that some material has been deleted; the latter is indicated by (....).

ONE

Missing Front Teeth (A9)

1 Na kótóró tí mbi, áíta, pémbé tí mbi só í báa amanquer só aɛkɛ séngé pɛpɛ.

2 Na kótóró tí mbi, mbéní dódó aɛkɛ. 3 Éré ní lenge. 4 Tongana ámérɛngé wále, ála mú mbéní mérɛngé óko, amú lenge azía na li tí lo awe, áni commencer tí dó lenge só.

5 Mbéní bíá ní aɛkɛ. 6 Ala sára bíá ní ngbii, agá así na ndó tí mo. 7 Tongana m[illegible] zí pémbé tí mo sí mo lungúla pɛpɛ, zo tí lenge ní apíka li tí mo. 8 Même, mo mú térɛ́ tí í kóé, í lángó na da tí lenge ní óko, aéré gí mo, atɛnɛ mo lóndó, mo kánga yángá tí da. 9 Ngbangatí pémbé tí mo angbá na kángángó ní só. 10 Mo laá, mo kánga yángá tí da. 11 Só aɛkɛ hé mbi lá kóé. 12 Tongasó, mbi lungúla pémbé tí mbi.

13 Na kótóró tí mbi, áni ɛkɛ dó lenge. 14 Mará tí dódó ndé ndé ndé na kótóró tí mbi. 15 Tongana áni toro lenge awe, na l'heure tí deux heures, áni sára koa na ámamá tí áni ngbii, na l'heure tí deux heures awe, áni bóngbi tí dó lenge. 16 Mamá tí lenge ní só aɛkɛ dó lenge ní só, vení tí lenge ní, lo tɛ kóbe míngi pɛpɛ. 17 Ngbangatí yá tí lo. 18 Angbá tongasó sí lo ɛkɛ dó na dódó nzoní. 19 Amú na lo kóbe míngi pɛpɛ. 20 Quand-même ngú, amú na lo gí na cuillère. 21 Lo yó ngú míngi pɛpɛ.

22 Tongasó, tongana áni bóngbi tí dɔ́ lenge ní awe, ála ɛkɛ píka ngɔ ní. 23 Eh bien, í hé bíá ní. 24 Ngɔ tí lenge ní na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí mbi, ála píka tongasó.

25 Tongasó, mbi báa yí só, anzɛrɛ na mbi awe, tongasó sí mbi buba pɛ́mbɛ́ tí mbi. 26 Aíta tí mbi, ála hé pɛ́mbɛ́ tí mbi apɛ o.

Translation

1 In my village, Friends, these teeth which are missing here are not for nothing.

2 In my village there's a dance. 3 Its name is *lenge*. 4 Girls choose one of their number and when they have placed a necklace on her neck, we begin to dance this *lenge*.

5 There's a song (which accompanies the dance). 6 They sing the song and come to you. 7 If you have not had your teeth removed, the *lenge* girl taps your head. 8 If you take all of us here (gathered together) and we slept in the *lenge* girl's house, they would call on you alone saying, "Get up, shut the door. 9 It's because your teeth are still intact. 10 You there, shut the door." 11 This was always making me a butt of ridicule. 12 So I took out my teeth.

13 In our village we dance the *lenge*. 14 There are different kinds of dances in my village. 15 After we have strung the beads, around two o'clock (in the afternoon), after we have worked for our mothers, at two o'clock, we

gather to dance the *lenge*. 16 The leader of the *lenge*, the proprietor of the *lenge*, she doesn't eat very much. 17 Because of her stomach. 18 It stays as it is so that she can dance well. 19 They don't give her much food. 20 Even water is given her by the spoonful. 21 She doesn't drink much. 22 So after we have gathered to dance the *lenge*, they beat the drum. 23 We sing the song. 24 The *lenge* drum beat in my village, that's how they beat it.

25 So I saw this and since it attracted me, I ruined my teeth. 26 Friends, please don't make fun of my teeth.

Notes

1. *í* -- The speaker uses this pronoun to mean 'you (plural)' as in her own language (Yakoma) or as used by Protestant missionaries. The latter is more likely, because she also uses *áni* (sentence 4). *séngé pɛpɛ* -- A sentence in the negative with *séngé* is often used to introduce an explanation: for example, *Lo goe na France séngé apɛ. Lo goe tí báa Générale de Gaulle*. 'He didn't go to France without a reason; he went to see General de Gaulle'.

2. *mbéní* ... *aɛkɛ* -- This kind of construction is almost formulaic in the opening part of a discourse. If one wanted to talk about a friend who was studying in Paris, he would begin by saying: *Mbéní íta tí mbi aɛkɛ. Lo ɛkɛ sára l'école na Paris*.

4. *tongana* -- Since *ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ wále*, repeated in *ála*, is the subject of *mú*, *tongana* introduces the whole clause. On the other hand, perhaps this first phrase is to be taken as 'as for girls'.

6. *sára bíá* = *hé bíá*.

7. *zí* -- This verb and *lungúla* are synonymous here. It is unclear why both are used.

8. *í lángó* ... *ɔ́kɔ* 'we sleep together'. *da tí lenge* -- Probably a special hut made for the occasion.

9. This and the following clause may be a part of the preceding sentence. *kángángó* -- Nominalization of *kánga* 'to shut'. The occurrence of this verb in the very next sentence is undoubtedly accidental.

11. *hé* -- With an object, 'to laugh at, ridicule'. In other contexts it means simply 'to laugh'.

12. *lungúla* -- That is, she had the teeth removed by someone else.

14. This whole phrase can be taken as the subject of an omitted *ɛkɛ*.

15. *toro* -- This does not appear to be a Sango word, but it seems to have the meaning 'to string'.

16. *vɛní* -- The adult (perhaps elderly) woman is owner of the *lenge* probably because she has the right to initiate the ceremonies and dispense certain privileges. However, her authority may be temporary; in this case she may be acting as master of ceremonies. Both uses

occur in the Gbaya language where the equivalent of vɛní is wan.

17. This may be a part of the preceding sentence.

20. quand-même -- Used in the same way as même in 8. This use with a noun is common in Sango; perhaps it has the same meaning as tongana with a noun in this context.

Questions

1. Éré tí dódɔ́ ní aɛkɛ yɛ̨.

2. Ala zía lenge ní na ndo wa.

3. Tongana mɔ lungúla pɛ́mbɛ́ tí mɔ apɛ, zo tí lenge ní asára yɛ̨ na mɔ.

4. Aɛkɛ ngbanga tí mɔ tí kánga yángá tí da ngbangatí yɛ̨.

5. Ala bóngbi tí dɔ́ dódɔ́ ní na l'heure yɛ̨.

6. Mamá tí lenge ní atɛ kóbe apɛ ngbangatí yɛ̨.

7. Ala mú ngú na mamá tí lenge ní na yɛ̨.

Model Sentences

1. Mará tí dódɔ́ ndé ndé na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí mbi (14)
'There are different kinds of dances in my village'.

2. I sára kɔa ngbii, í bóngbi tí dɔ́ dódɔ́ (15)

'We work for a while, then we gather to dance'.

3. Angbá tongasó sí lo kɛ dɔ́ na dɔ́dɔ́ nzoní (18) 'It stays like this so she can dance well'.

4. Ala hé pɛ́mbɛ́ tí mbi apɛ o (26) 'Please don't make fun of my teeth'.

5. Mbi báa yí só, anzɛrɛ na mbi awe, sí mbi buba pɛ́mbɛ́ tí mbi (25) 'I saw this and since it attracted me I ruined my teeth.

TWO

Funeral Dances (A21)

1 Dódɔ́ só í ɛkɛ dɔ́ ou bien tɛ́rɛ́ tí mbéní zo tí mɔ asɔ lo ngbii, lo kúí awe, et puis mɔ ɛkɛ ngá na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ apɛ, mɔ gá, tɛ́nɛ́ ní asɔ mɔ, mɔ toto. 2 Et puis, mɔ hínga malin ní apɛ, sí mo sára samba, ou bien tongana duma. 3 Et puis mɔ éré ázo, títɛnɛ ála gá atoto lo na mɔ. 4 Zo kóé, même ámɛ́rɛngɛ́, zo wa, zo só bɛ́ tí lo ayí, lo gá. 5 Zo só bɛ́ tí lo ayí apɛ, lo ngbá yí tí lo.

6 Et puis ála gá. 7 Et puis así na tɛ́rɛ́ tí dɔdɔ ní awe, amú ngɔ, amú ngo tí í, alɛkɛ. 8 Asára mbéní dú. 9 Et puis, ngɔ ní aɛkɛ gí osió. 10 Sí asára mbéní dú, azía ngo ní na bé ní, sí acommencer tí píka. 11 Amɛ́rɛngɛ́ agá míngi, ahé bíá, mbali. 12 Éré tí dɔ́dɔ́ ní laá, mbali. 13 Et puis ahé bía, acommencer tí sára ngiá tí hé bíá. 14 Et puis ákótá zo amá awe, agá na tɛ́rɛ́ tí dɔ́dɔ́ ní, títɛnɛ, et puis, agá, atoto ngá kɔ́á só quoi na íta tí í. 15 Et puis títɛnɛ ngonzo akái na bɛ́ tí lo. 16 Sí ndá ní laá, ázo aɛkɛ gá míngi títɛnɛ a-aider lo ngá na yá tí mawa tí lo.

Translation

1 Dances which we dance, when one of your relatives is sick for a long time and he has died and you are not

in the village (that is, when it happened), you come and it grieves you, so you cry. 2 You don't know what to do, so you make beer or else mead. 3 And you call people to come to mourn him for you. 4 Everybody, even children, no matter who the person may be, whoever wants to, comes. 5 Whoever doesn't want to stays where he is.

6 So they come. 7 When they have come to the dance, they take a drum, take our drums and get things ready. 8 They make a hole. 9 There are four drums. 10 So they make a hole and put the drums over it, and begin to play (them). 11 Many children come and sing the mbali song. 12 That's the name of the dance, the mbali. 13 They sing and begin to have a good time, to sing. 14 When the adults have heard, they come to the dance to mourn the death for our brother (who has died). 15 So that his heart will not grieve. 16 That's why many people come, to help him during his misfortune.

Notes

1. The "relative clause" at the beginning here does not seem to be grammatically linked to what follows. It may be the title of the narrative, or it may be a fragment of a whole sentence that was cut off. ou bien — This expression is sometimes used in Sango with the same function that it has in French; here it seems to mean

nothing. The whole account is characterized by some French phrases used meaninglessly. *zo tí mɔ* -- In certain contexts this is a synonym of *famille*: one more readily says *lo ɛkɛ famille tí mbi* than *lo ɛkɛ zo tí mbi* in speaking of a person nearby or recently referred to. *ngá* -- No satisfactory explanation has yet been found to account for all occurrences of postverbal *ngá*. Sometimes it retains its meaning of 'also'; sometimes it has the meaning 'even'; but here and in 14 some other meaning is intended. *mɔ ɛkɛ* ... *mɔ toto* -- Stringing along clauses like this without connectives (that is paratactically) is characteristic of Sango.

2. *malin* -- This expression should not be confused with *sára malin* which means 'to use guile, be deceptive'. Perhaps the speaker means to say *manière*; its Sango pronunciation is similar to that of *mayɛlɛ*, a Sango word (although apparently Lingala in orgin), which is similar to *malin* (pronounced *malɛ́ɛ*) in meaning. *ou bien* -- *wala* could have been used. *tongana* -- By taking out the meaning 'or' and putting *duma* in the place of *samba* we get the verb phrase *sára tongana duma*. In this position *tongana* can have neither the meaning 'when' nor 'like', but it may add a meaning of 'possibility' to the whole verb phrase. The clause may then be translated 'You might make some mead'. There are enough documented occurrences of *tongana* used in this way to indicate that it is

grammatical, but not enough to make one sure what its function is.

3. éré ázo ... atoto -- More simply said éré ázo tí toto lo.

4. More or less literally: 'Everybody, even children, anybody, the person whose heart wants to, comes'.
zo wa -- This expression gets the meaning 'whoever' when it occurs in a list.

7. tɛ́rɛ́ tí dɔ́dɔ́ -- na dɔ́dɔ́ could also have been used, but the expression here more specifically refers to the group assembled for dancing.

14. et puis -- The first occurrence is that of a connective, acting like sí, but the second has no function whatsoever; this is also true of 15.

15. Perhaps this clause should be appended to the preceding one: agá, atoto kɔ́á ... títɛnɛ ngonzo akái 'they come to mourn so that grief will die down'.
ngonzo -- Ordinarily this word means 'anger'. Here it refers to the sorrow that the person experiences in being in a situation of mawa (next sentence). More than sorrow is experienced; Centralafricans react to death differently from us. Death is a humiliation because nonrelatives use sickness and death as an excuse for ridiculing one's family and enjoying its misfortune. Some of this shame is removed when the mourners are numerous and there is much to eat and drink. In such a situation one can say

ála lungúla kamelá na lé tí mbi 'they removed my humiliation'.

Questions

1. Tɛnɛtí yȩ zo aéré ázo na tɛ́rɛ́ tí dódó ní.
2. Zo wa sí alíngbi gá na tɛ́rɛ́ tí dódó ní.
3. Ala zía ngo ní na ndo wa.
4. Éré tí dódó ní aɛkɛ yȩ.
5. Tɛnɛtí yȩ ázo ní atoto kóá ní.

Model Sentences

1. Tɛ́rɛ́ tí mbéní zo tí mɔ asɔ lo (1) 'One of your relatives is sick'.

2. Mɔ éré ázo títɛnɛ ála gá atoto lo na mɔ (3) 'You call people to come and mourn him for you'.

3. Zo só bɛ́ tí lo ayí apɛ, lo ngbá yí tí lo (5) Whoever doesn't want to stays where he is'.

4. Ala sí na tɛ́rɛ́ tí dódó ní awe, amú ngɔ, alɛkɛ (7) 'When they have arrived at the dance, they take drums and get them ready'.

5. Ndá ní laá, ázo akɛ gá míngi (16) 'That's why many people come'.

THREE

Teasing a Foolish Child (F21)

1 Só aɛkɛ mbéní kété histoire. 2 Aɛkɛ tongana parabole tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ giriri. 3 Mais aɛkɛ taá parabole bíaní pɛpɛ. 4 Tɛnɛtí aɛkɛ yí só asára na pópó tí ázo. 5 Aɛkɛ mbéní hánda títɛnɛ só ázo aɛkɛ hánda ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ na ní.

6 Giriri ála tɛnɛ, mbéní ndɛkɛ aɛkɛ. 7 Ala dé éré tí lo, só aɛkɛ na yángá tí Sara Madjingay, atɛnɛ koro. 8 Tongasó, ála tɛnɛ, ndɛkɛ só aɛkɛ na póró tí pendere míngi. 9 Póró tí lo aɛkɛ pendere míngi. 10 Tongasó, tɛnɛtí lá ní ká giriri ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ aɛkɛ kánga póró na ngbundá tí ála. 11 Na tongana mbéní lá só, lá asú ngangó míngi. 12 Na lá achauffer na sése ngangó míngi awe, tongana ázo kóé abóngbi na gbɛ́ dé tí kéké na yá tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ ndé ndé awe, na ayí tí hánda ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ só lé tí ála aɛkɛ tongana búbá. 13 Tongaso mbéní ɔ́kɔ atɛnɛ na mɛ́rɛngɛ́, atɛnɛ, á, mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mbi, mɔ báa, ázo agá na póró tí koro só na ndo só, aɛkɛ pendere míngi. 14 Na mbi yí tí vɔ na mɔ, mais mo ɛkɛ pɛpɛ. 15 Tongasó mɔ báa, ála hɔ́ na ní fadé fadé, aɛkɛ goe na ní na gbɛ́ dé só ká, tɛnɛtí ála língbi tí vɔ na íta tí mɔ ká. 16 Tongasó, tongana mo yí, mɔ kpé fadé fadé, mɔ éré ála na ní, ála gá na ní, fadé mbi vɔ na mɔ.

17 Tongasó mérɛngé akpé ngangó míngi na lá só.
18 Lo sí ká, ahúnda ákótá zo só adutí ká, atɛnɛ, ála
tɛnɛ na mbi, atɛnɛ, ála gá na póró tí koro na ndo só,
aɛkɛ na ndo wa. 19 Tongasó ákótá zo só ní ahínga ká awe,
aɛkɛ téné tí hánda. 20 Tongasó, ála tɛnɛ, á, mérɛngé tí
mbi, mɔ báa, ála hǫ́ na ní fadé fadé na pɛkó tí da ká.
21 Ala ɛkɛ goe na ní na gbɛ́ dé ká. 22 Tongasó mɔ kpé
fadé míngi, fadé mɔ wara ála na lége.

23 Na mérɛngé só akpé jusqu'à así na mbéní da ká,
awara ázo. 24 Atɛnɛ, á, mais póró tí koro só ála gá na
ní na ndo só fadé fadé aɛkɛ na ndo wa. 25 Atɛnɛ, ála
hǫ́ gí fadé fadé na ndo só. 26 Mɔ tomba ála, fadé mɔ
wara ála.

27 Na ála ɛkɛ hánda mérɛngé só tí kpé na lé tí lá só,
jusqu'à lá azó lo. 28 Jusqu'à sí tongana zo só andoé lo
awe atɛnɛ, mérɛngé tí mbi, mo hú téré tí mo, só aɛkɛ
téné tí hánda séngé. 29 Mais mérɛngé ní ahínga kózo ní
pɛpɛ, tongana amá atɛnɛ, aɛkɛ yí tí nzoní míngi na aɛkɛ
póró tí nzoní míngi. 30 Tongasó bɛ́ tí lo adó ngangó
míngi. 31 Lo yí tí wara yí ní, mais lo tomba gí pupu
séngé, jusqu'à lá azó lo, sí tongana zo só andoé lo awe
afa na lo ndá tí téné ní, atɛnɛ, ála ɛkɛ hánda mɔ tɛnɛtí
lá azó mɔ séngé. 32 Na ndá ní, mérɛngé só akíri.

33 Na téné só aɛkɛ téné tí kótóró.

Translation

1 This is a short story. 2 It is like a village parabole from long ago. 3 But it is not a real parabole. 4 Because it is something which actually took place among people. 5 It is a kind of trick with which people deceived their children.

6 Long ago they said that there was a bird. 7 It is called in the Sara Madjingay language koro. 8 They said that this bird had a very nice skin. 9 Its skin was very pretty. 10 Because in those days long ago children used to tie skins to their waists. 11 On one of those days, the sun shone very hard. 12 When the sun had made the ground hot and when people had gathered in the shade of trees in different villages, they would set out to deceive the foolish children. 13 So one of the adults says, "My child, a koro skin was brought here; it's very pretty. 14 I wanted to buy it for you, but you weren't around. 15 They took it away and went off to that shade over there just a while ago to sell it to one of your buddies. 16 So if you want it, run and call them back with it, and I'll buy it for you."

17 So then the child ran fast. 18 Arriving there he asked the old men sitting there, "I have been told that a koro skin was brought here. Where is it?" 19 The adults knew that this was a trick. 20 So they said, "My

child, just a few minutes ago they took it behind the house over there. 21 They are taking it to the shade over there. 22 If you run real fast, you'll meet them on the road."

23 So the child ran until he came to a house and found some people. 24 He said, "Where is the *koro* skin which was brought here just now?" 25 They said, "They left here just a few minutes ago. 26 If you run after them you'll catch up to them."

27 They were just deceiving this child to make him run in the sun so that the sun would scorch him. 28 This went on for quite a while until someone who liked him said, "My child, stop. This is just a trick." 29 But this child did not know this to begin with when he heard that it was a very nice thing and it was a very good skin. 30 He had been very excited. 31 He wanted to get the thing, but he just ran after the wind until the sun scorched him and someone who liked him told him what was happening, saying, "They're deceiving you just so that the sun will scorch you." 32 After that the child went home.

33 This is a village story.

Notes

2. *parabole* -- The word is taken from the New Testament. Here it is probably synonymous with *histoire*.

4. yí só -- This is the object, not the subject, of the verb sára. This is why the translation is in the passive. The subject of the verb is indefinite.

5. títɛnɛ -- This appears to serve no function here; the sentence makes good sense without it. The kernel sentence is : ázo aɛkɛ hánda ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ na hánda só.

7. só aɛkɛ -- This clause is parenthetical. The sentence can stand without it.

8. póró -- If the speaker really means skin and not feathers (kɔ́á tí tɛ́rɛ́), this must have been a large bird, perhaps an ostrich; they are found in the Chad where the Sara Madjingay live. pendere míngi -- The position of pendere (here instead of before the noun) is probably determined by the use of míngi. One cannot say pendere míngi póró.

11. tongana -- Its function here is not clear. mbéní lá só --An unusual construction; mbéní lá would have been enough. The speaker may be making an error in his use of só; in 17 lá só should be lá ní.

12. chauffer na sése -- The use of na is unclear. The expression is equivalent to lá amú sése 'sun took hold of the earth'. tongana búbá -- búbá 'crazy' is a strong word, and the speaker weakens it with tongana.

15. vo -- Here the verb means 'to sell' (= ká). Originally the word meant 'to barter'.

18. kótá zo -- This expression can also mean 'adult'.

20. *ála* -- The inconsistency in the use of singular and plural pronouns is typical of Sango narrative; it must be accepted as a characteristic of the language. But the inconsistency may only be apparent; one of the adults is speaking for the group.

19. *zo só ní* -- One expects the order to be *ní só*.

24. *póró ... fadé* -- Notice the long "relative clause" as subject of the verb *ɛkɛ*.

28. *jusqu'à* -- It seems to be used like *ngbii*, in which case this is a nonverbal "clause" followed by a clause introduced by *sí*. *ndoé* -- A New Testament word meaning 'to love'. In ordinary Sango *yí* is used. *awe* -- Its use is unclear.-There is no need for a perfective here. *hú tɛ́rɛ́* -- The usual expression for 'to rest'.

29. Perhaps there are two sentences here, the first ending with *pɛpɛ*: 'The child didn't know this at the beginning. When he heard (about the skin), he thought it was a very good thing....'.

Questions

1. Parabole só aɛkɛ taá tɛ́nɛ́?
2. Tɛnɛtí yɛ̧ sí parabole só aɛkɛ taá tɛ́nɛ́ apɛ.
3. Éré tí ndɛkɛ só aɛkɛ yɛ̧.
4. Na lá ní ká ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ akánga póró na ndo wa.
5. Tongana lá azá ngangó míngi, ázo abóngbi na ndo wa.

6. Tɛnɛtí yę sí zo ní avɔ póró ní apɛ.

7. Tɛnɛtí yę sí ála hánda mérɛngé só.

8. Zo wa sí afa téné ní na mérɛngé ní.

9. Tɛnɛtí yę sí bé tí mérɛngé ní adɔ́.

Model Sentences

1. Azo ahánda ámérɛngé na ní (5) 'They tricked children with it'.

2. Ndɛkɛ só aɛkɛ na póró tí pendere míngi (8) 'This bird had a very nice skin'.

3. Azo abɔ́ngbi na gbé dé tí kéké na yá tí kótóró ndé ndé (12) 'People gathered in the shade of trees in different villages'.

4. Ala hɔ́ na ní fadé fadé aɛkɛ goe na ní na mbáge só ká (15) 'They took it away and went off in that direction just a while ago'.

5. Mo éré ála na ní, ála gá na ní, fadé mbi vo na mɔ (16) 'If you call them back with it, I'll buy it for you'.

6. Mérɛngé ní ahúnda ákótá zo só adutí ká (18) 'The child asked the people who were gathered there'.

FOUR

A Choosy Father-in-law (F29)

1 Mbéní lá, mbéní kɔ́li adú mérɛngɛ́ tí wále, atɛnɛ wále tí mbi, báa mérɛngɛ́ tí mbi só; sí tongana lo kɔnɔ, mbéní kɔ́li tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí mbi só alíngbi tí marier lo apɛ. 2 Sí mérɛngɛ́ ní alángó ngbii, akɔnɔ. 3 Mbéní kɔ́li agá, atɛnɛ, babá, mú na mbi mérɛngɛ́ tí wále tí mɔ só, mbi marier. 4 Sí kɔ́li ní atɛnɛ, mbi língbi tí mú mérɛngɛ́ tí mbi na mɔ apɛ. 5 Sí kɔ́li ní atɛnɛ, ó, mɔ língbi tí mú na mbi mérɛngɛ́ tí mɔ ní apɛ ngbangatí yɛ̧. 6 Mbi fáa mbéní zo tí mɔ? 7 Sí kɔ́li ní atɛnɛ, mɔ goe, mbi yí tí mbi apɛ.

8 Alángó ngbii, mbéní zo agá encore, atɛnɛ, babá, mú na mbi mérɛngɛ́ tí mɔ, mbi marier. 9 Sí atɛnɛ, mbi língbi tí mú na mɔ mérɛngɛ́ tí mbi apɛ. 10 Sí zo ní atɛnɛ, mɔ língbi tí mú na mbi mérɛngɛ́ tí mɔ só apɛ ngbangatí yɛ̧. 11 Sí mérɛngɛ́ tí mɔ só alíngbi mbi míngi. 12 Mɔ mú na mbi lo, mbi marier. 13 Zo ní atɛnɛ, mbi yí tí mbi apɛ.

14 Asára ngú óse. 15 Mbéní zo agá encore, atɛnɛ, mú na mbi mérɛngɛ́ tí mɔ, mbi marier. 16 Sí zo ní atɛnɛ, bon, sí tongana mɔ répondre na question tí mbi só, fade mɔ ɛkɛ marier mérɛngɛ́ tí mbi só. 17 Sí zo ní atɛnɛ mɔ sára question ní, fadé mbi ɛkɛ répondre. 18 Kɔ́li ní atɛnɛ, répondre ní. 19 Sí tongana mɔ yí tí gá na ákɔ́ngbá tí mú

na pɛkɔ́ tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mbi só, mɔ gá na kɔ́li ní apɛ na wále ní apɛ. 20 Sí kɔ́li só atɛnɛ, ó, babá, question só alíngbi mbi apɛ o. 21 Mbi goe tí mbi o. 22 Kɔ́li ní akíri na da, ahúnda babá tí lo, babá tí mbi, báa, mbi yí goe marier mɛ́rɛngɛ́ wále tí zo só, sí atɛnɛ, sí tongana mbi répondre na question tí lo ní, mbi ɛkɛ mú mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní. 23 Babá tí lo ahúnda lo, atɛnɛ, question ní aɛkɛ yɛ̧. 24 Mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní atɛnɛ, question ní lo tɛnɛ, sí tongana mbi yí tí goe na kóngbá tí mú na pɛkɔ́ tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí lo ní, mbi goe na wále ní na kɔ́li ní apɛ. 25 Sí babá tí lo atɛnɛ, mɔ má yángá tí mbi apɛ só, mbi língbi tí tɛnɛ na mɔ apɛ. 26 Ngbangatí, tí mɔ, mɔ sára tí mɔ gí ngangó mɛ́. 27 Sí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní atɛnɛ, babá, tongana mɔ yí apɛ, mbi ɛkɛ gí ámbéní wále.

28 Et puis asára encore ngú otá. 29 Mbéní kɔ́li agoe, atɛnɛ, babá, mbi yí tí marier mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mɔ ní. 30 Sí kɔ́li ní atɛnɛ encore, sí tongana mɔ répondre na question tí mbi só, fadé mɔ ɛkɛ marier wále tí mbi só. 31 Sí atɛnɛ, bon, question ní aɛkɛ yɛ̧. 32 Kótá kɔ́li só atɛnɛ, tongana mɔ yí tí gá na kóngbá tí mú na pɛkɔ́ tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mbi só, mɔ gá na wále ní na kɔ́li ní apɛ. 33 Sí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní apenser ngbii, agoe na kɔ́tórɔ́, ahúnda babá tí lo, babá, báa mbéní yí só kótá zo só atɛnɛ na mbi. 34 Babá tí lo ahúnda lo, atɛnɛ, yɛ̧. 35 Sí atɛnɛ, kótá zo só atɛnɛ sí tongana mbi yí tí goe na kóngbá tí mú na pɛkɔ́ tí wále só, mbi goe na kɔ́li ní na wále ní apɛ. 36 Si babá tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní apenser ngbii, atɛnɛ, mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mbi, goe

gí taá kótá ndɛkɛ. 37 Sí tongana mɔ fáa ndɛkɛ ní, mɔ gá mɔ mú na íta tí mɔ, atɔ́ lo na mbi, sí tongana mbi tɛ, fadé mbi ɛkɛ répondre question ní na mɔ.

38 Mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní amú arɔ tí lo, agoe na ngonda. 39 Agí ndɛkɛ ngbii, afáa mbéní ɔ́kɔ, sí agá, amú na íta tí lo. 40 Íta tí lo wále atɔ́ na lo. 41 Amú, agoe zía na table, na babá tí lo. 42 Babá tí lo atɛ ngbii, yá tí lo así. 43 Ayɔ́ ngú na pɛkó ní, sí atɛnɛ, question ní aɛkɛ, sí tongana lo húnda mɔ encore, mɔ tɛnɛ sí tongana mɔ yí tí gá tí mú kóngbá tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mɔ ní, mɔ gá na ndá péréré apɛ, na lá kúí apɛ.

44 Sí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní agoe, akpé, así na place tí babá tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ só, atɛnɛ, babá, mbi sí awe. 45 Babá tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ só atɛnɛ, mɔ wara reponse ní? 46 Sí lo tɛnɛ, mbi wara awe. 47 Et puis, babá tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ ní ahúnda kóli ni, atɛnɛ, réponse ní aɛkɛ yɛ̧. 48 Atɛnɛ na kóli só, sí tongana mɔ yí tí goe tí mú kóngbá tí pɛkó tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mɔ só, mɔ goe na lá kúí apɛ, mɔ goe na ndá péréré apɛ. 49 Sí babá tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí wále só apenser ngbii, atɛnɛ, bon, mɔ gá, mɔ dutí na sése. 50 Sí kóli ní agá, adutí na sése. 51 Kɔ́li só atɛnɛ na wále tí lo, atɔ́ kóbe kóé, azía na table na kóli só. 52 Kóli só atɛ ngbii, yá tí lo así. 53 Sí atɛnɛ, mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí mbi, question tí mbi só mbi kara na áíta tí mɔ ngbii, sí mɔ gá, mɔ répondre só, mɔ mú wále tí mɔ, ála goe na lo. 54 Sí kóli ní amarier na wále só.

55 Tongasó áGbeya aεkε tεnε, il faut mɔ má yángá tí babá tí mɔ.

Translation

1 Once a certain man had a daughter and said, "Wife, look at my child here; when she grows up, no man from my village can marry her." 2 So the child lived a while and grew. 3 A certain (young) man came and said, "Father, give me your daughter to marry." 4 So the man said, "I can't give you my daughter." 5 So the (other) man said, "Oh, why can't you give me this daughter of yours? 6 Have I killed anyone of yours?" 7 But the father said, "Go away, I don't want to."

8 After a while another person came and said, "Father, give me your daughter to marry." 9 But the father said, "I can't give you my daughter." 10 So the man said, "Why can't you give me this daughter of yours? 11 Because your daughter suits me very well. 12 Give her to me to marry." 13 But the father said, "I don't want to."

14 Two years went by. 15 Another man came and said, "Give me your daughter to marry." 16 So the father said, "All right, when you answer this riddle of mine, you will marry my daughter." 17 So the man said, "You ask the riddle, and I'll answer it." 18 The father said, "Answer it. 19 When you want to bring things to pay for this daughter of mine, don't bring the male or the female."

20 So the man said, "Oh, Father, this riddle doesn't suit me. 21 I'm going." 22 The man went home and asked his father, "Father, look, I want to go marry this man's daughter, but he says that after I answer his riddle I will have the girl." 23 His father asked him, "What is the riddle?" 24 The young man said, "The riddle he asked was, when I want to go make a deposit on his daughter, I am to take neither the male nor the female." 25 Then his father said, "Because you don't obey me, I can't tell you. 26 Because, you, you are persistently disobedient." 27 So the young man said, "Father, if you refuse, I'll look for other women."

28 And then another three years went by. 29 Another man went and said, "Father, I want to marry this daughter of yours." 30 Then the father said again, "When you answer this riddle of mine, you'll marry my daughter." 31 So the young man said, "All right, what's the riddle?" 32 The old man said, "When you want to bring things to pay for this daughter of mine, bring neither the female nor the male." 33 Then the young man thought a while, went home, and asked his father, "Father, look at this thing that this old man said to me." 34 His father asked him, "What?" 35 He said, "This old man said that when I wanted to take things to pay for the girl, I was to take neither the male nor the female." 36 So the young man's father thought a while and said, "My son, go hunt a really big

bird. 37 And when you have killed the bird, come give it to your sister to cook it for me, and after I've eaten it, I'll answer the riddle for you.

38 The young man took his bow and went into the bush. 39 After hunting a while he killed one, and he came and gave it to his sister. 40 His sister cooked it for him. 41 He took and went and put it on the table for his father. 42 His father ate until he was full. 43 After drinking some water he said, "This riddle is this, so when he asks you again, say that if you want to come to pay for this daughter of yours, don't come in the morning or the evening."

44 So the young man ran off and came to the place of this girl's father and said, "Father, I've come." 45 The girl's father said, "Did you get the answer?" 46 And the young man said, "I got it." 47 So the girl's father asked the young man, "What's the answer?" 48 He said to the old man, "When you want to go to pay for this daughter of yours, don't go in the evening and don't go in the morning." 49 So the girl's father thought a while and said, "All right, come and sit down." 50 So the young man came and sat down. 51 Then the man said to his wife, "Cook all kinds of food and put it on the table for this young man." 52 The young man ate until he was full. 53 Then the old man said, "My son, this riddle of mine with which I stumped all your companions for a long time, you've come

and answered it, take the girl and go." 54 So the young man married the girl.

55 So the Gbeya say, "You must obey your father."

Notes

1. *sí* -- The narrator's style is characterized by a great use of this connective. The student should study each occurrence carefully. Some of them may have no real function: for example, *sí tongana* in 19 and elsewhere. The narrator seems to use these words as a single unit.

2. *alángó ... akono* -- This is a typical Sango sentence. All the speaker wants to say is that the child then grew up.

3. *babá* -- This is being used as a polite form of address. In 20 politeness is also conveyed by the sentence particle *o*. *kóli* -- This is just to indicate the sex. These are young men, even adolescent boys, who come. In 33 the word *mɛ́rɛngɛ́* is used of one of them. *mariɛr* -- Notice the two closely connected clauses: *mú* ... *marier* and in 2 *lángó ... kono*. *mú wále* is the typical Sango expression for 'marry'. When the French verb is used, it is sometimes followed by *na* as in 54.

8. *alángó* -- There may be no specific subject. Although the meaning is 'things stayed like this for a

while', one can not use *yí* 'thing' with the verb when it is used temporally. Another temporal expression is in 14.

11. alíngbi -- One expects *na* after this verb when the meaning is to 'suit': that is, 'is equal to' or 'is sufficient to'. But *na* is often omitted in certain set expressions. See also 20.

12. *mú na mbi lo* -- This seems to be an ungrammatical lapse. One expects *mú lo na mbi*.

16. *question* -- The context suggests that this is a riddle, not a question in the proper sense. There is no Sango word for riddle. The verb is being used as it is in French, that is, with a preposition: *repondre a*. But in Sango one also says *kíri téné na téné só*, 'answer this statement (or question)'. In 37 the verb is used differently, with the meaning 'explain'.

19. *mú na pɛkó tí* -- This is the usual expression for paying with goods (*kóngbá*) or money (*nginza*) for a wife. The whole transaction is referred to by the expression *vɔ wále* 'buy a wife'. It must be remembered, however, that *vɔ* originally meant 'to barter' as is seen in the expression *vɔ ngéré* 'to do business', perhaps originally 'to barter with one person giving money (pieces of iron, shells, etc.)'. One does not use *payer* in reference to marriage, but it is commonly used of all other purchases.

22. *da* -- One expects *kótóró* here because the young man would be from a different village. *yí goe marier* --

Notice how verbs are strung along. Ordinarily the dependent verbs would be introduced by *tí*: that is, *yí tí goe tí marier*.

25. Compare this sentence with the moral in 55. In 36 the father is not bribing his son; each is doing the other a good turn.

26. *sára ngangó mɛ́* -- Another one of the many expressions with the empty verb *sára*; *ngangó mɛ́* '*hard ears*'.

27. *gí wále* -- Perhaps the young man is threatening to be promiscuous with women. The expresion is ambiguous.

38. *arɔ kɔndɔrɔ*.

43. *yɔ́ ngú* -- There is nothing significant about drinking water. The narrator is simply indicating that the father did not give the answer until he was entirely through with the meal. Ordinarily one washes his hands after eating, since the fingers have been used in dipping into the sauce, then rinses out his mouth, and then drinks water. Nothing is drunk during the meal proper. *aɛkɛ* -- Everything that follows is a complement of this verb. *gá na ndá péréré apɛ* -- The story is a disappointment because the answer to the riddle does not make sense. In any case, there is an ambiguity here: *gá na kóngbá* means 'bring goods' and *gá na ndá péréré* means 'come in the morning'. Perhaps the ambiguity is part of the riddle. To be so, it would have to exist in the native language of the speaker.

44. *mbi sí awe* -- This or *mbi gá awe* is a common way of announcing one's arrival as part of one's greeting.

49. *dutí na sése* -- This does not necessarily mean 'sit on the ground'.

53. *kara na* -- The kernel sentence is *mbi kara áíta tí mo na question tí mbi*.

FIVE

The Disobedient Sister (F34)

1 Na lége tí tɛrɛ tí kótɔ́rɔ́ tí áni, mbéní masía aɛkɛ, na íta tí lo tí kɔ́li ní.

2 Tongasó, lo na íta tí lo tí kɔ́li ní, ála ɛkɛ goe na mbéní kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́. 3 Na ála sí na mbéní place tí kótá tɛ́mɛ́. 4 Na tongasó, íta tí lo tí kɔ́li ní atɛnɛ na lo, atɛnɛ, só í goe só, tongana í goe, í sí ká na place ní, fadé í wara mbéní zo ká. 5 Mais mɔ sára lángó sioní na ála pɛpɛ. 6 Tongana mɔ sára lángó sioní, kíríngó tí áni tí sí gígí tí gá na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́, fadé yá tí mɔ só mɔ mɛ́ ngɔ só agá kótá awe, na fadé mɔ língbi wara lége tí sí gígí apɛ.

7 Tongasó, íta tí lo tí wále só amá awe, na ála goe. 8 Na tongana ála commencer tí goe, ála commencer tí goe, lo commencer tí sára bíá na yángá tí Gbeya, lo commencer tí tɛnɛ [Song in Gbeya]. 9 Tongana ála commencer tí sára bíá tongasó, tɛ́mɛ́ só aɛkɛ súru. 10 Tɛ́mɛ́ só aɛkɛ súru. 11 Tɛ́mɛ́ só aɛkɛ súru, na ála na íta tí lo ali ká, na place ní. 12 Ala goe dutí ká, ála lángó míngi, ála sára ngú míngi kété.

13 Na tongasó, íta tí lo tí wále só, abata tɛ́nɛ́ só lo tɛnɛ na lo giriri só pɛpɛ. 14 Tongasó, lo sára lángó sioní na mbéní zo ká. 15 Na fadesó lo mɛ́ ngɔ awe.

16 Tongasó, lóndóngó tí ála ká tí kíri tí sí gígí na

gígí, ála gá jusqu'à na yángá ní só, aεkε kété kété só, wále ní awara lége tí sí gígí ká pεpε, tεnεtí yá tí lo akono awe, na lége tí lo tí sí gígí ká aεkε pεpε tεnεtí tέrέ tí dú tí tέmέ ní aεkε kété kété míngi.

17 Tongasó íta tí lo ní atεnε na lo, atεnε, mbi tεnε na mo awe giriri, mbi tεnε, alíngbi mo sára yí tí sioní pεpε. 18 Tongana mo sára yí tí sioní, fadé yá tí mo agá kótá, na fadé mo língbi wara lége tí sí gígí pεpε. 19 Mais fadesó, mo má yángá tí mbi pεpε. 20 Mo goe mo sára sioní yí awe, yá tí mo agá kótá awe, bon, fadé mo ngbá tí mo na yá tí dú tí tέmέ ní, na mbi, fadé fadé mbi goe tí mbi. 21 Tongasó, lo zía lo na yá tí dú tí tέmέ ní, lo sí gígí tí lo.

22 Só aεkε tέnέ só, tongana zo asára tέnέ na mo, mo kε yángá tí lo, mo bata tέnέ tí lo pεpε, fadé mbéní lá, yí atí na li tí mo, na fadé lo εkε húnda yángá tí mo.

23 Só ndá tí tέnέ ní laá. 24 Tí mbi awe.

Translation

1 According to a traditional tale of ours, there was a certain unmarried girl and her brother.

2 Now she and her brother were going to another village. 3 And they came to place with a huge rock. 4 So her brother said to her, "Going on as we are, when we go and arrive there, we'll find some people there. 5 Don't

commit fornication among them. 6 If you commit fornication, when it comes time for us to come out to go home, your belly will have conceived and got big, and you won't be able to come out."

7 So when his sister had heard this, they went on. 8 And as they began to go along, to go along, he began to sing in Gbeya, he began to say [....]. 9 When they began to sing like that, this rock split. 10 This rock split. 11 This rock split, and he and his sister entered there in the opening. 12 They went and stayed there; they stayed quite a while; they were there several years.

13 But his sister did not obey what he had told her long before. 14 So she commited fornication with a man there. 15 And now she had become pregnant.

16 So on their departure to return to come out, they arrived at the opening, but it was very small and the girl did not find a way to come out because her belly was big and there was no way for her to go out because the sides of the hole in the rock were very narrow.

17 So her brother said to her, "I had told you long ago that you must not commit evil. 18 If you commited evil, your belly would become big, and you wouldn't be able to come out. 19 But now you haven't obeyed me. 20 You've gone and commited evil and your belly is big; all right, you'll stay in the cave of the rock, and as for me, I'm going right away." 21 So he left her in the cave of the

rock and went out.

22 This is what this is about: When someone tells you something but you reject it and you don't obey it, some day something will happen to you, and he will reproach you for it.

23 This is the end of the story. *24* Mine is done.

Notes

1. *tí* -- Notice how possessed phrases can be piled on top of each other: *kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí áni*, then *tɛrɛ tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí áni*, and finally *légé tí tɛrɛ tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí áni*. *masía* -- Protestant word for unmarried girl.

2. *lo na* -- Instead of anticipatory plural *ála na*. Compare 11.

3. *tɛ́mɛ́* -- It is not clear what is happening. The characters make their way through the split in the rock only after the earthquake (?), but they had already set out on their trip and they apparently did not have to use such a passage to get to their destination. Yet it seems that the girl becomes pregnant at the village to which they were going in the first place, not a different one. Why did they leave the main path and crawl through the cleft in the rock? And why did they stay so long? Things might be much clearer in the longer version, which in Gbeya might take anywhere from 15 minutes to one hour to tell.

However, even in the long version there might be problems, and it is part of the tradition for the audience to ask the storyteller questions.

4. *só í goe só, tongana í goe, í sí ká* -- This might seem like too many words to say what needs to be said, but the construction is typically Sango.

5. *lángó sioní* -- A Protestant expression for extramarital sexual relations.

6. *kíríngó ... na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́* -- Preclausal construction. See also 16. *yá tí mɔ só mɔ mɛ́ ngɔ só* -- As it stands, this construction, although perfectly good Sango, does not seem to be grammatical. One expects the first phrase to be a part of the following verb phrase in a kernel sentence, but *ngɔ*, not *yá* is the object of *mɛ́*, Perhaps there is an omitted *na*: for example, *mɔ mɛ́ ngɔ na yá tí mɔ* 'you conceived with your belly'. The construction here would then mean 'the belly with which you conceived'. *fadé ... awe* -- Both occurring to give the meaning 'will have ...'.

12. *lángó* -- 'To stay for one or more nights' is a common use of this verb: for example, *mbi lángó ká gí ɔ́kɔ* 'I stayed there just one night'. *ngú míngi kété* -- *kété* attenuates the force of *míngi* and not vice versa, for which see 16.

13. *pɛpɛ* -- The verb *bata* is negated, not *tɛnɛ*.

15. *fadesó* -- The meaning 'now' should not always be

taken in a temporal sense. This word also functions as a discourse-linking word. Here and in 19 *fadesó* seems to mean something like 'here you've gone and done so and so' in disregard of something that had been said. That is, *fadesó* implies earlier statements and actions, not just time.

16. *gígí* -- The occurrence after the verb *sí* does not seem to be necessary with *na gígí* following. But some people appear to use *sígí* or *sígígí* as a single verb; if they could nominalize it into *sígíngó* or *sígígíngó*, then it would be such a verb for them. *kɔnɔ* -- The same as *agá kótá* in 6 and 18.

17. *awe* -- One expects *awe* at the end of the clause. If it is misplaced, it is in imitation of missionary speech. *alíngbi mɔ sára* -- Putting *alíngbi* before a clause is the missionary way of expressing obligation. The narrator could have simply said *mbi tɛnɛ na mɔ tí sára yí tí sioní pɛpɛ*.

22. *tɛ́nɛ́ só* -- It is difficult to tie this clause in with the following, but it may be a perfectly good preclausal construction.

SIX

The Rat and the Mouse (F41)

1 Tɛ́nɛ́ só mbi yí tí tɛnɛ só aɛkɛ tɛ́nɛ́ tí tɛrɛ tí deko.

2 Mbéní deko aɛkɛ na yá tí ngonda. 3 Na kété kété ní aɛkɛ ngá. 4 Tongasó tɛ́nɛ́ tí deko na tɛ́nɛ́ tí ngbó, lá kóé tɛ́nɛ́ tí ála aɛkɛ lége ɔ́kɔ pɛpɛ. 5 Kété kété deko só ayí tí sára malin. 6 Na lo yí tí gá tí kamáta da tí kótá deko ní só.

7 Mbéní lá tongana kótá ní só alángó na yá tí da tí lo, na lo ɛkɛ gí lége tí gá tí lángó na yá tí da só, na lo gí bɛ́ tí lo, lo tɛnɛ, na mbi só, mbi wara ngangó tí sára da pɛpɛ. 8 Na fadé mbi sára tongana yɛ̨ tí wara kótá da tí lángó da.

9 Na mbéní lá, tongana lo yí tí gá awe, lo kamáta kótá kugbé na yángá tí lo.

10 Tongana lo ɛkɛ gá awe, na lo gá ndurú tí li na yá tí da só awe, andáa kótá kugbé só aɛkɛ toto na mɛ́ tí deko ká, aɛkɛ má. 11 Na deko só alángó na yá ní ká só amá, atɛnɛ, é, só yɛ̨ laá.

12 Tongasó awe, na kótá ní só amá, atɛnɛ, só gó tí zo só mbi má só, aɛkɛ gó tí zo séngé pɛpɛ. 13 Mais só aɛkɛ ngbó laá sí ayí tí gá só.

14 Tongasó awe, lo zía lóró da. 15 Lo sí gígí na mbéní lége tí dú ká, na lo zía yá tí da ní séngé.

16 Tongasó awe, kété kété deko só agá, ali na yá ní, tɛnɛtí só kótá ní só aɛkɛ na mbito tí ngbó. 17 Tongana lo báa, atɛnɛ, ngbó só fadé alíngbi tí sára mbéní yí na lo. 18 Tongasó awe, lo sí gígí, na lo zía lóró da, sí kété kété ní só agá, alángó na yá ní. 19 Só aɛkɛ mbéní palin.

20 Sí tongana mbéní kótá zo aɛkɛ, sí mo yí tí mú yí na mabókɔ tí lo, na mo ɛkɛ ngangó pɛpɛ, mɔ gá na lége tí pánda, sí mɔ língbi tí kamáta yí só aɛkɛ na mabókɔ tí lo só.

21 Tέnέ tí mbi laá, awe. 22 Só aɛkɛ tέnέ tí tɛrɛ tí deko.

Translation

1 The story I want to tell is a fable about the Rat.

2 There was a certain Rat in the bush. 3 And there was a very small one too [that is, a small mouse]. 4 (Now as for rats and snakes, they never get along together.) 5 The Mouse wanted to play a trick. 6 And he wanted to come and take the house of this big rat.

7 One day when the Rat was lying in his house, and the Mouse was looking for a way to come to live in this house, the latter thought, "Me, I don't have the strength to build a house. 8 And what am I going to do to have a large house in which to live in?"

9 So one day, when he had decided to come, he took a large leaf in his mouth.

10 When he had approached and was just about to enter the house, this large leaf was making a noise heard by the Rat. 11 And the Rat was lying there inside; he heard the noise and said, "Say, what's that there?"

12 At this the Rat heard and said, "This human voice I hear is not the voice of an ordinary human. 13 But this is a snake which wants to enter."

14 At this he took flight. 15 He escaped by another exit of the hole, and he left the inside of the house empty.

16 So the Mouse entered it because the Rat was afraid of snakes. 17 When he saw what was happening, he thought that the snake might do something to him. 18 So he went out and fled, so that the Mouse came and slept in it.

19 This was a trick. 20 So when there is an important person and you want to take something from him, and you don't have the strength (or authority), you come by deception, so you can take what he has.

21 I'm finished with my story. 22 It's a fable about the Rat.

Notes

1. *tɛ́nɛ́ tí tɛrɛ* -- For comment see N49, sentence 1. *deko* -- This word is used of both rats and mice. Although there are indeed big and little rats, the story makes better sense with a rat and mouse rivalry.

4. *tɛ́nɛ́* -- This sentence says that the rat and the snake were not in verbal accord, that they disagreed over something. Since the speaker wants to say that they were rivals, it is surprising that he did not say something like *lá kóé deko na ngbɔ́, ála sára bɛ́ ɔ́ko apɛ* 'the rat and the snake never got along together'.

7. *na* -- This speaker's style is characterized by a great use of this connective, even to introduce a main clause preceded by a *tongana* clause.

10. *andáa* -- Sometimes this word is translated 'it turns out that' or 'in other words'. There is no doubt about what is happening; the narrator just calls attention to it: 'At the very moment when the mouse arrived, the leaf was already making a sound'. *aɛkɛ má* -- Notice that the same object, *deko*, is, on the one hand, the specific grammatical object of *tí* and the understood subject of *má*. This kind of construction is common in Sango.

12. *zo* -- This is not to be taken literally as 'person'. The animals are after all taking the place of people. *séngé* -- Tricking a character by devising something very unusual is a common theme in the fables.

17. ngbó só -- This is the same as fadé ngbó só alíngbi .... na lo -- ní could have been used instead of lo because the rat is speaking of himself.

Questions

1. So aɛkɛ tɛ́nɛ́ tí yɛ.

2. Kótá deko ayí tí sára yɛ.

3. Kótá deko ayí tí wara yɛ.

4. Kótá deko akamáta kugbé ní na yɛ.

5. Yɛ atoto na mɛ́ tí kótá deko ní.

6. Tɛnɛtí yɛ kótá deko ní azía da tí lo.

7. Tongana kótá deko azía da ní, mbéní yí aɛkɛ na yá ní?

8. Zo alíngbi tí mú yí na mabóko tí zo na légə yɛ.

Model Sentences

1. Tɛ́nɛ́ tí deko na tí ngbó (2) 'This is about rats and snakes'.

2. Lo yí tí gá tí kamáta da tí kótá deko ní só (4) 'He wanted to come to take possession of Rat's house'.

3. Mbi wara ngangó tí sára da pɛpɛ (5) 'I don't have the strength to make a house'.

4. Lo gá ndurú tí li na yá tí da só (8) 'He was just about to enter this house.

5. Só akɛ ngbó laá sí ayí tí gá só (13) 'That's a snake which wants to come here'.

6. Lo ɛkɛ na mbito tí ngbó (17) 'He is afraid of snakes'.

SEVEN

Guarding a Corn Field (N13)

1 Babá tí mbi adú í mɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí kóli otá. 2 Lo ɛkɛ na wále osió.

3 Fadesó lo gá, apíka piquet tí coton ukú. 4 Na pɛkó ní agá aɛkɛ fáa yáká tí coton só. 5 Agoe lú nzó, agoe lú nzó. 6 Amú í ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ otá, azía í na yá tí yáká tí nzó ní, atɛnɛ, só, tongana í goe, sí ndɛkɛ afáa nzó ní óko, í gá í sí na yá tí da tí ní apɛ.

7 Na pɛkó ní lo goe, aɛkɛ fáa yáká tí coton. 8 Na pɛkó ní í goe í dutí.

9 Ndá ní kóli agá anzí nzó tí babá tí í só, afáa otá. 10 Et puis na pɛkó ní, í gá í sí í tɛnɛ, á, íta, fadesó babá aɛkɛ mbírímbírí apɛ. 11 Mais gí í ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ í ɛkɛ na yáká tí nzó. 12 Tongasó mo gá mo fáa yáká tí nzó ní só. 13 Mo fáa ngbangatí yɛ. 14 Lo tɛnɛ, ó, í tɛnɛ tongasó apɛ. 15 Agoe amú í awe, apíka í ngbii. 16 Atɛnɛ, tongana í tɛnɛ lá só sí fadé ní ɛkɛ fáa yángá tí í na zɛmbɛ. 17 I tɛnɛ, á, íta, ka í ɛkɛ ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ só. 18 Babá atɛnɛ, tongana í ɛkɛ na ndo tí nzó ní, mbéní zo agá atoucher apɛ. 19 Mais lo gá ahúnda í apɛ. 20 Au lieu ayí títɛnɛ lo húnda babá tí mbi só. 21 Lo húnda babá tí mbi só apɛ, agá afáa yáká tí nzó tí babá tí mbi só. 22 Anzí otá akpé na ní awe.

23 Na pɛkó ní mbi gá mbi sára tɛ́nɛ́ ní, mbi tɛnɛ, babá, mbéní kótá kóli agá, alóndó na yá tí ngonda, agá así. 24 Na pɛkó ní afáa yáká tí nzó ní. 25 Et puis í gá í sára tɛ́nɛ́. 26 Lo tɛnɛ, ní ɛkɛ fáa í na likongó. 27 Fadesó lo kpé awe. 28 Et puis babá tí mbi só atɛnɛ, í goe í fa lége tí lo. 29 I tɛnɛ, non, í hínga tí í lége tí lo apɛ, ngbangatí só í ɛkɛ tí í ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ o. 30 Lé tí í adé aouvrir apɛ só.

31 Et puis í tɛnɛ na lo tongasó, babá tí í só agá ahúnzi tɛ́rɛ́ tí lo awe. 32 Atɛnɛ, í o, ndá adé í gá na yáká tí nzǒ ní apɛ. 33 Agá ahúnzi tɛ́rɛ́ tí lo awe, ngbii.

34 Na pɛkó ní, kóli só agoe atɛ awe. 35 Et puis na pɛkó ní lo sí gígí títɛnɛ, agá afáa mbéní só, babá agá agbó lo awe. 36 Babá agbó lo awe, atɛnɛ, andáa lo ɛkɛ zó tí nzí. 37 Andáa yí tongasó lá kóé, sí í gá sí lo ɛkɛ tomba í na ndo tí nzó ní só. 38 Et puis agbó lo, así gígí na lo na makunzi. 39 Et puis apayer cinq cents francs.

40 Awe.

Translation

1 My father had three sons. 2 He had four wives. 3 Once he came and staked out five cotton plots. 4 Then he cultivated these cotton fields. 5 He (also) planted corn. 6 He took us three kids and put us in the corn field and said that if, in spite of our being there, birds

should eat even one ear of corn, we better not come home.

7 Then he went and cultivated the cotton field. 8 Then
we went and sat down.

9 Then a man came and stole our father's corn and
broke off three (ears). 10 So we went to him and said,
"Friend, right now Father is not here. 11 But it's just
us kids in the corn field. 12 But you come and you cut
this corn field. 13 Why did you cut it?" 14 He said, "Ho,
don't you talk like that." 15 He grabbed us and beat us
for quite a while. 16 He said, "If you say anything
today, I'll cut your tongues out with a knife." 17 We
said, "Ah, Friend, we're just kids. 18 Father said that
when we were in the corn field, no one could come and
touch the corn." 19 But he didn't come and ask us.
20 He should have first asked my father. 21 He didn't ask
my father, but he came and cut my father's corn field.
22 He stole three ears and ran off with them.

23 Then I came and reported this, I said, "Father, a
grown man came out of the bush and arrived (in the field).
24 Then he cut the corn field. 25 Then we came and said
something. 26 He said, he would kill us with a spear.
27 He's run away now." 28 Then my father told us to go
and show where he went. 29 We said, "No, we're sorry, but
we can't show where he went, because we're just kids.
30 We're still immature."

31 So when we had told him this, our father came and

hid. 32 He told us not to go to the corn field in the morning. 33 He came and hid for a while.

34 In the meantime, this man had gone and eaten (the corn). 35 Then when he came out into the open to break off some ears of corn, Father went and grabbed him. 36 Father went and grabbed him and said, "So he's a thief. 37 So this is how things always are when he chases us from the corn." 38 Then he took the man before the (village) headman. 39 Then (the thief) paid 500 francs.

40 That's all.

Notes

1. babá tí í adú í -- Although dú literally means 'to give birth, to bear', it can be used of men to mean 'to have offspring'.

3. píka piquet tí coton -- In the cotton-growing areas cotton agriculture has long been standardized by means of a field of 60 paces square, the minimum of what an adult could work by himself. The act of measuring out the field was accompanied by pounding stakes into the ground, setting off one person's field from the others in an area where all the cotton gardens for one village were located. An equivalent expression is jalon tí coton.

4. fáa yáká -- All that is involved in preparing a field for planting, but primarily chopping down trees

and clearing the brush.

24, 25. fáa yáká tí nzó -- This is clearly a lapse. The narrator meant to say fáa nzó 'break off an ear of corn'.

31. lé ... aouvrir (or lungúla) 'eyes ... open' -- This is a metaphorical characterization of maturity.

Questions

1. Where was the father when the boys were in the corn garden?

2. From where did the boys see the man?

3. Why did the boys talk to the man about the theft?

4. What did the man threaten the boys with? How did the man threaten the boys?

5. What reason did the boys give for not knowing where the man had gone?

6. When did the man return to steal corn?

Model Sentences

1. Gí í ámérengé, í ɛkɛ na yá tí yáká tí babá (13) 'It's just us kids in Father's garden'.

2. A, íta, ka í ɛkɛ ámérengé só (19) 'Friend, but we're just kids'.

3. I hínga lége tí lo apɛ, ngbangatí só í ɛkɛ tí

í ámérɛngé o (30) 'We don't know where he went because we're just kids'.

4. *Ndá adé, ála goe na yáká tí nzó apɛ* (33) 'In the morning don't go to the corn garden'.

5. *Andáa, lo ɛkɛ zo tí nzí* (36) 'So it comes out that he's a thief'.

6. *Yí tongasó lá kóé sí lo ɛkɛ tomba í na ndo tí nzó ní só* (37) 'What happens like this all the time is that he's chasing us from the corn'.

EIGHT

The Helicopter's Arrival (N21)

1 Mbi, Aliko laá sí mbi gá tí sára tɛné tí hélicoptère na ála.

2 Mbéní lá, í ɛkɛ na école, avion tí só, éré ní hélicoptère aɛkɛ hǫ́ na ndúzú. 3 I, áélève ní kóé, í lóndó, í zía lé tí í kóé, í báa ní. 4 Ailes ní aɛkɛ tourner míngi míngi. 5 I lóndó kóé, í sí gígí awe. 6 Na pɛkó ni, áíta tí í akpé tí ála, tí kpé na marché tí báa ní. 7 I ngbá tí í gí na yá tí da. 8 Et puis maître ní, directeur tí í atɛnɛ na ámbéní áíta tí í, atɛnɛ na ámaître tí í, atɛnɛ, ála só agoe tí báa tí ála kózo awe, ála ngbá. 9 I só í goe tí í pɛpɛ, í goe fadesó, í báa. 10 Eh bien ála só agoe tí ála sans permission, fadé ála ɛkɛ punir [puni] ála.

11 Eh bien na onze heures, í goe í sí. 12 Na onze heures í sí na place tí marché, í báa hélicoptère tí premier fois ní. 13 I baa ní awe, alóndó tí decoller. 14 Azo ní só na yá ní ayú kpoto tí ála, azía na li tí ála. 15 Chauffeur ní só, éré ní na yángá tí français, pilote, lo gbó yí ní, atourner, bingbá bingbá yí ní, atourner, sí ailes tí avion ní acommencer tí tourner. 16 Fadesó acommencer tí tourner, kótá pupu agá, sí í kóé, asára pupu na lé tí í. 17 Directeur tí école tí mbáge tí

ngú apousser í, atɛnɛ í goe na gbɛ́ ní pɛpɛ. 18 Et avion ní acommencer tí lóndó. 19 Asára poussière, et áfta tí í kóé akíri na gígí. 20 Alóndó awe, chauffeur ní abara í míngi míngi. 21 Et puis ála tɛnɛ, fadé ála ɛkɛ kíri na dimanche.

22 Et na dimanche ní, mbi ɛkɛ da pɛpɛ. 23 Mbi goe tí sára messe na quinze kilomètres na lége tí Bambari. 24 Agá, mbi ɛkɛ da sí mbi báa tí lá ní pɛpɛ. 25 Só agá na dimanche ní. 26 Mbi gá, áfta tí mbí asára tɛ́nɛ́ ní na mbi. 27 Sí mbi yí tí sára tɛ́nɛ́ ní na ála.

Translation

1 It's me, Aliko, who has come to tell you about the helicopter.

2 Once, when we were in school, this airplane, it's called a helicopter, it was passing overhead. 3 All of us students, we got up and we all turned our eyes and looked at it. 4 Its propellers were turning fast. 5 We had all risen and gone outside. 6 Then some of our buddies ran to the market to see it. 7 As for us, we stayed in the building. 8 Then the teacher....., our Director said to some of us, told our teachers that they who had already gone to see would stay. 9 We who had not gone, we could now go to see it. 10 But those who went without permission would be punished.

11 So at eleven o'clock we went and arrived at the

place. 12 At eleven o'clock we came to the market place and saw the helicopter for the first time. 13 After we had seen it, it arose to leave. 14 The people inside put on their caps. 15 The driver, whose name in French is *pilote*, took the thing, the very red thing, and turned it so that the propellars started to turn. 16 When it started to turn, a big wind arose, and the wind got in all our eyes. 17 The school director from the other side of the river pushed us away and said that we shouldn't go underneath (the helicopter). 18 The airplane started to rise. 19 It made dust, and our buddies drew away. 20 When it got off the ground, the driver waved to us a lot. 21 They also said that they would return on Sunday. 22 On that Sunday I wasn't there. 23 I had gone for Mass at a place 15 kilometers away on the Bambari road. 24 When it came, I wasn't there to see it on that day. 25 It came on that Sunday. 26 When I had returned, my buddies told me about it. 27 So I want to tell you about this (incident of the helicopter).

Notes

1. *laá* -- Although the combination of *laá* and *sí* is grammatical, it would have been possible to have one or the other.

2. *éré ní* -- Notice how the equivalent of a possessive

relative clause is constructed: for example, *zo só éré ní (aɛkɛ) Pierre* 'the person whose name is Peter'. See also sentence 15. *tí só* -- By using this possessive construction and pausing after it, the speaker expresses doubt, for example, 'This what-you-call-it kind of airplane'.

6. *tí ála* 'on their part' -- This is neatly contrasted with *tí í* 'on our part' in 7.

8. The narrator got mixed up but finally makes things straight: The principal of the school authorized the other teachers to dismiss the children. *ála só* -- Notice the contrast again between *ála* and *í* as in 6 and 7.

10. *ála* -- Since the narrator is referring to what the principal said, the subject of *ɛkɛ punir* is *directeur*. The plural pronoun is used instead of *lo* out of respect, and since this is not a quoted passage *ní* is not used.

13. *báa awe* -- This person prefers to use nonmarked dependent clauses instead of subordinating them with *tongana*. See also 20, 24, and 26. Thus, his style is different from that of the narrator of N56.

16. *í kóé* -- This kind of dangling construction is common in the languages of the Centralafrican Republic. The kernel sentence is probably *kótá pupu agá, asára lé tí í kóé* 'a big wind arose and got into all our eyes'.

17. *atɛnɛ í goe* -- A command in indirect discourse.

19. *gígí* -- Elsewhere this word means 'outside' with respect to some kind of enclosure. It can also refer

to any space more or less removed from a center. Thus *yama tí ngú* na *yama tí gígí* are contrasted for 'aquatic creatures' and 'nonaquatic creatures'. By extension *gígí* can be used of outsiders: for example, *ázo tí gígí*.

21. *kíri* -- Here this verb means 'come back to' instead of 'go back to'.

23. *sára messe* -- The child is simply going to attend the service. A more general term is *sára Nzapá* 'to attend a religious service, to worship'.

24. *pɛpɛ* -- The main clause is *mbi ɛkɛ da pɛpɛ* 'I wasn't there'.

Questions

1. Tongana hélicoptère aɛkɛ hǫ́ na ndúzú, ámérɛngɛ́ ní aɛkɛ na ndo wa.
2. Amérɛngɛ́ ní akpé na ndo wa tí báa hélicoptère ní.
3. Azo na yá tí hélicoptère ayú yí yę na li tí ála.
4. Tɛnɛtí yę Aliko abáa hélicoptère na lá ní apɛ.

NINE

Highwaymen on the Road to Bangui (N23)

1 Mbéní lá mbi sí na Bangui. 2 Mbi na íta tí mbi í lóndó tí goe na kótá galá. 3 I gá, í tí ázo otá na kótá lége. 4 Donc í ɛkɛ na yá tí camion. 5 Allez í sí tongasó, ázo agá barrer lége na áni. 6 Azo agá barrer lége na áni. 7 Na mbéní ɔ́kɔ agá lutí na devant tí áni. 8 Na mbéní ɔ́kɔ asára mabɔ́kɔ tí lo tongasó. 9 Allez, íta tí mbi ní acompter mabɔ́kɔ tí lo ní apɛ. 10 Lo ɛkɛ na yá tí vitesse. 11 I kpé jusqu'à í sí. 12 Alors mbi ɛkɛ na yá tí camion na pɛkɔ́. 13 Mbéní abi tɛ́mɛ́, ayí tí wara mbi na ká. 14 Mbi dénge li tí mbi tongasó, tɛ́mɛ́ ní apasser mbi zéro.

15 Mais í kpé ngbii, í lutí. 16 Alors íta tí mbi ní así gígí, ahúnda mbi, atɛnɛ, yɛ laá apasser mbi na yá tí camion ní. 17 Mbi tɛnɛ, yí apasser mbi apɛ. 18 Atɛnɛ, mbi báa ábandit só alutí na lége só. 19 Mbi tɛnɛ, oui, mbi báa ála, mbi báa ála. 20 Lo ngbá ndo só, lo húnda mbi, atɛnɛ, est-ce que ála bi mbéní yí na mbi apɛ? 21 Mbi tɛnɛ, non, ála bi tɛ́mɛ́ na mbi, eh bien tɛ́mɛ́ ní apasser mbi zéro awe.

22 Allez, í lutí na yángá tí magasin tí Printania. 23 Alors mbéní police ní agá óse. 24 (....) Donc, mbéní kɔ́li ní anzí nginza tí mbéní ní. 25 Kɔ́li ní agá tí vɔ

ngombe tí lo, sí kɔ́li ní, wa nzí ní agá nzí yí ní. 26 Alors (....) police ní apenser, atεnε, aεkε áni sí áni nzí nginza tí kɔ́li ní só. 27 Alors lo gá lo commencer tí fouiller áni. 28 Alors íta tí mbi ní atεnε, non, aεkε áni apε. 29 síngó tí áni laá. 30 Aεkε áni apε. 31 Aεkε mbéní zo ndé sí anzí nginza ní. 32 Alors police ní azía lége na áni, áni kíri.

Translation

1 I once went to Bangui. 2 My brother and I left for the capital. 3 On our way we came upon three men on the highway. 4 We were in the truck. 5 Having arrived, we found our way barred by them. 6 The men had barred our way. 7 One of them stood in front of us. 8 Another one gestured with his arms like this. 9 My brother ignored the man's gesture. 10 He was going fast. 11 We kept going until we arrived (where they were). 12 I was in the back of the truck. 13 One of them threw a stone to hurt me. 14 I ducked my head like this and the stone went by without hurting me.

15 We went on for a while and stopped. 16 My brother then got out and asked me what had happened to me in the back of the truck. 17 I told him that nothing had happened to me. 18 He asked me if I had seen the bandits who had stood at the roadside. 19 I said, "Yes, I did; I did."

20 He asked me also, "Didn't they throw anything at you?" 21 I said, "On the contrary, they threw a stone at me but it went by without hitting me." 22 We ended up in front of the Printania store. 23 Two policemen came. 24 A man had stolen another man's money. 25 The man had come to buy a gun and this man, the thief, stole the money. 26 The police thought it was we who had stolen this man's money. 27 He came and began to search us. 28 My brother said, "No, it's not us. 29 We've just arrived. 30 It's not us. 31 It's someone else who has stolen the money." 32 So the police let us go, and we went home.

Notes

2. *mbi na íta* -- The anticipated plural pronoun *í* could have been used instead of *mbi*.

4. *donc* -- The French use does not make much sense here. This is where one might have a Gbaya expression which means 'in other words' and is used as a connective in a narrative.

11. *jusqu'à* -- Used here like *ngbii* in 15.

14. *passer* -- Notice the difference between this use and the one in 16. *zéro* -- Probably from soccer argot.

17. *yí ... apɛ* 'something ... not' equals 'nothing'.

21. *awe* -- One does not expect *awe* with its perfective meaning here. Perhaps this is an error in imitation of missionaries. The speaker also uses the Protestant pronoun

áni. But one does not expect too many deviations from her, because lingua franca Sango is her native language.

22. *Printania* -- This is a self-service grocery store in downtown Bangui which, because of its central location, is a meeting place for Europeans and Africans alike.

23. *óse* -- This clause is equivalent to *police óse agá*. The only difference is a stylistic one.

24. *mbéní ní* -- The contrast between *mbéní kóli* 'a man' and *mbéní ní* 'another (man)' is clear, but this is a rare use of *ní*. One could also say *mbéní zo ndé* 'a different person'.

26. *sí* -- Here and in 31 are good examples of this connective combining a subject with a verb.

Questions

1. Where were the girl and her brother when they met the three men?
2. How many men stood in front of the truck?
3. What did one of the men do with his arms?
4. Where was the girl when all this happened?
5. How did the girl avoid getting hit?
6. What was thrown at the girl?
7. Where did they stop after coming into Bangui?
8. Why did the policemen search them?

9. Whose money was stolen?

Model Sentences

1. Mbi na íta tí mbi í lóndó tí goe na Bangui (2) 'My brother and I left for Bangui'.

2. I gá í tí ázo otá na kótá lége (3) 'On our way we came upon three men on the highway'.

3. I sí tongasó, ákɔ́li ní akánga lége na í (5) 'Having arrived, we found our way barred by the men'.

4. I kpé ngbii, í lutí (15) 'We went on for a while and stopped'.

5. Ita tí mbi ní ahúnda mbi atɛnɛ, yɛ laá asára mbi na yá tí camion (16) 'My brother asked me what happened to me in the truck'.

6. Mbi báa ábandit só alutí na lége só (18) 'I saw the bandits who were standing along the road'.

7. Ala bi mbéní yí na mɔ apɛ? (20) 'Didn't they throw anything at you?'

8. Aɛkɛ mbéní zo sí anzí nginza tí kɔ́li ní só (31) 'It is someone else who stole the man's money'.

9. Síngó tí í laá (29) 'We've just arrived'.

TEN

A Vacation Episode (N28)

1 Éré tí ɱbi -----.

2 Aɛkɛ gí lá tí Pâques na vacances. 3 I goe na
Kaba na tɛ́rɛ́ tí ngú tí gí ásusu. 4 I na ámɛ́ṛɛngɛ́ tí
wále otá. 5 I goe, í lángo (....) na nzoní da. 6 Mbéní
lá, ázo atɛnɛ na í, ákótá yạma aɛkɛ ká. 7 Et puis í
quitter na place ní, í goe na mbéní place encore. 8 (....)
Ala tɛnɛ place ní encore, kótá yạma ní atambéla na li tí
da. 9 Et puis í goe tí gí ásusu na ngú. 10 I zía
ámɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí wále na yá tí da ní. 11 Tí kíríngó ní, í sí
na yá tí da na bí. 12 Amɛ́rɛngɛ́ tí wále acommencer tí dó
tɛ́rɛ́ tí ála. 13 Ala tɛnɛ, fadé yạma ní adévorer í.
14 Et puis í londó na place ní na bí. 15 Temps ní, lune
aɛkɛ da. 16 I lóndó na bí, í traverser ákótá kéké atí
na sése. 17 I gá ngbii ngbii ngbii, (....) í sí na place
só í lángo da só, jusqu'à í lángo ká. 18 Así na ndá
péréré, í goe na place tí ámbéní zo, alángó na tɛ́rɛ́ tí í.
19 Ala mú na í yí tí tɛ. 20 I kíri encore na place ní.
21 I lángó, (....) í má ábruit tí ngonda kóé. 22 (....)
ámbéní kéké acommencer tí kúngbi na tɛ́rɛ́ tí í. 23 (....)
Na bí, pupu acommencer tí gá. 24 Et puis da ní alungúla,
atí na sése. 25 Na ndá péréré encore, í lóndó í goe na
kɔ́ṭɔ́rɔ́.

26 Awe.

Translation

1 My name is -----.

2 This happened during Easter vacation. 3 We had gone to where the Kaba people live along the river to fish. 4 There were three other girls and myself. 5 We went and slept in a nice house. 6 One day people told us that there were large animals there. 7 So we left that place and went to another place. 8 They said that in that place also large animals climbed on the roof of the house. 9 So we went fishing at the river. 10 We left a few of the girls in the house. 11 It was night when we returned to the house. 12 The girls began to tremble. 13 They said, "The animals are going to eat us." 14 So we left the place at night. 15 There was moonlight at that time. 16 We left at night and crossed the river by means of trees which had fallen down. 17 We walked on and on until we came to the place where we were to sleep, and there we slept. 18 When morning came, we went to where some people were nearby. 19 They gave us something to eat. 20 Then we went back again to the original place. 21 As we lay in bed, we heard all the bush noises. 22 Trees began to fall around us. 23 The wind began to blow at night. 24 And then the house collapsed and fell to the ground. 25 In the morning we left and went home.

26 That's all.

Notes

2. *lá* -- This word does not always have the meaning 'sun' or 'day'. Here with *Pâques* it means 'Easter time' (compare 15 where *temps* is used with the same sense). The expression *mbéní lá* ordinarily means 'one day' or 'once', but these meanings seem inappropriate here since the vacation period is so short and because we can assume that the people told them about the animals upon their arrival. One would expect *lá ní* 'at that time' instead.

3. *Kaba* -- The Kaba are an ethnic group ("tribe") who live in the northwestern part of the country and speak a Sara language. They are primarily agricultural people; but those who live near the large rivers also fish. There is nothing unusual about the locative use of *Kaba*; the names of other ethnic groups can be used in the same way. *ásusu* -- Individuated plurality. This text should be studied for the various uses of the plural marker. See also: 4, 7, 9, 10, 16, 18, 19, 22.

4. *í* -- Anticipated plural. If there were only four girls, however, sentence 10 would have to mean 'One other girl and I left the remaining two girls in the house'. The anecdote as told does not ring entirely true. One does not expect four adolescent girls to go on a fishing expedition, especially in an area that is unfamiliar to them.

7. quitter na -- In French quitter would not be followed by a preposition, but it is being used here like lóndó as in 14. encore -- It is not always clear how this French word is being used. Here it seems to be used with the same meaning as ndé 'different' which would occur in this position also. In sentence 20 it has the meaning 'once more'. But in 25 its contribution is difficult to determine. Notice that encore occurs both in noun and verb phrases.

11. tí kíríngó ní -- Literally, 'as for returning'. A nominalized verb phrase at the beginning of a sentence is used like English on returning home. It would have been possible to say í kíri í sí na yá tí da na bí.

12. dɔ́ -- The usual expression for 'tremble' is tɛ́rɛ́ adɔ́ (dɔ́ means 'to stamp, pound'). This is an illustration of how verbs can be used both transitively and intransitively.

13. í -- Quotative plural pronoun. Some people make a distinction between í, for the plural, and ní for the singular.

16. só -- One expects só here after kéké and in 18 after zo to make the "relative clause".

17. jusqu'à -- As with so many of its occurrences, it is difficult to say what this word contributes here. The meaning 'until' is achieved by the combination of ngbii and sí.

18. así -- This is a generalized use of the subject marker. There are not too many such uses, and one suspects that in some instances there is interference from French. The authentic Sango way of saying 'in the morning' or 'when it was morning' is ndá adé where ndá is a noun and dé a verb.

Questions

1. Where did the girls go?
2. Where did they sleep?
3. What did the local villagers tell these girls?
4. What effect did fear have on the girls who stayed in the house?
5. Who gave them food to eat?
6. How many nights were the girls at this place?

Model Sentences

1. Tí kíríngó ní, í sí na yá tí da na bí (11) 'It was night when we returned to the house'.

2. I sí na kótɔ́rɔ́ só í lángó da só (17) 'We arrived at the village where we were sleeping'.

3. Ala mú na í yí tí tɛ (19) 'They gave us something to eat'.

4. I goe na tɛ́rɛ́ tí ngú tí gí ásusu (3) 'We went to

the river to fish'.

5. I lóndó na place ní (8) 'We left that place'.

6. Kótá yama atambéla na li tí da (8) 'Large animals climb on the roof of the house'.

7. I zía ámérɛngɛ́ tí wále na yá tí da (10) 'We left the girls in the house'.

8. Akótá kéké atí na sése (16) 'Large trees fell down'.

9. Ala lángó na tɛ́rɛ́ tí í (18) 'They slept (or lived) next to us'.

ELEVEN

Making a Living (N 45)

1 Bon, í dutí na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ só, í doit tí sárángó kɔa tí yáká (....). 2 Yáká tí sindi í sára, yáká tí kárákó í sára, yáká tí gɔzɔ í sára, yáka tí kufu í sára. 3 Bon, kɔa ní í wara gí na nginza aɛkɛ kɔa tí yáká tí í. 4 Bon, na pɛkɔ́ (....), mbéní kɔa ní. 5 Na pɛkɔ́ ní tongana l'impôt atí gí na sése, í commencer tí goe na la chasse (tí) gbánda. 6 I sára la chasse, í fáa yąma, í kíri, gá asára l'impôt na gbɛ́ kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́. 7 Bon, mbunzú 'vɛní amú na í coup de main tí sárángó nginza ní. 8 Mais í bata mbunzú nzoní. 9 Ngbangatí gbɛ́ tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ agá nzoní na í ngbangatí mbunzú, sí í sára na ní. 10 Tongana mbunzú pɛpɛ, í doit tí sára kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ pɛpɛ. 11 Mbunzú alɛkɛ kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ na tɛ́rɛ́ tí í, sí í bata gí mbunzú.

Translation

1 Well, since we are here in the village, we must engage in garden work. 2 We make sesame gardens; we make peanut gardens; we make manioc gardens; we make kufu gardens. 3 Well, the work which brings us money is our farm work. 4 Well, another work .... 5 Later (in more recent years), when taxation came to this country, we began to hunt by net. 6 We hunted and killed animals

and brought them home. 7 Well, the white man has helped us to earn money. 8 We have treated the white man well. 9 The reason is that our village (or country) has become good because of the white man, for whom we work. 10 If there were no white men, we could not make a country. 11 The white man has improved the country for us, so we keep the white man (in our country).

Notes

1. *doit tí* -- There appears to be no difference in meaning between a verb phrase and a nominalized verb phrase after the connective *tí*. Compare 7 and 10.

2. *kufu* -- This plant has not been identified.

yáká tí sindi -- By placing the object before the verb one gets the meaning 'as for ..,' that is, one places emphasis on the expression. In this context *í sára yáká tí sindi* would be very prosaic.

3. *kɔa ní í wara* -- Because of *aɛkɛ* which follows, this phrase is not to be taken as a "relative clause" without *só* between *kɔa ní* and *í wara*. The uninverted sentence is: *í wara nginza na kɔa ní* 'we get money from the work'. Consult grammatical notes for an explanation of this use of *na*.

5. *tí* 'fall' -- Although the English translation has 'come', it would not make much sense in Sango to use *gá*

here. In other expressions, *tí* means a sudden or unexpected arrival, as one might imagine from its other meaning 'fall'. Thus: *turúgu agá atí na li tí ála* 'Soldiers came upon them'; *fadé tɛ́nɛ́ ní atí na li tí mɔ* 'The blame will fall on you'. *gí* -- In contexts such as this one this word does not mean 'just' or 'only', but it is difficult to say what it does mean. Compare also sentences 3 and 11.

6. *gbɛ́ kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́* -- A speaker of English would simply say *kíri na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́*, which is also possible in Sango, but in some instances Sango is more specific than English, especially with locative expressions. It is also possible to say *gbɛ́ tí* and *yá* instead of *gbɛ́*.

9. *í sára na ní* -- This has been translated 'for whom we work', but perhaps this clause means 'we make our village (or, country) with them', and there are even other possibilities. The problem lies in identifying the meaning of *sára*, which by itself is almost an empty verb, and the nominal antecedent for *ní*.

Questions

1. What kinds of gardens are made?
2. What do people get from their gardens?
3. What is done with the meat when animals are killed?
4. Why has the country become better?
5. Why are white men allowed to stay in the country?

TWELVE

Threatened by a Young Buffalo (N49)

1 Tέnέ só mbi yí tí tεnε aεkε tέnέ tí mbéní tεrε tí gógɔ́á.

2 Na mbéní lá mbi lεkε likongó tí mbi nzoní, mbi goe na ngonda tí gí mbéní gógɔ́á, tεnεtí nzala tí kása asára mbi míngi. 3 Awe, mbi yí tí goe, mbi wara gεrέ tí ála. 4 Na mbi εkε gí ála, mbi yí tí báa, mbéní kété ní así gígí. 5 Agá, lo yí tí sára berá ngangó na mbi.

6 Na tongasó mbi monter kéké, na lo kíri. 7 Mais adú lo, lo sára gí lángó ɔ́kɔ́, lángó óse pεpε, sí lo ngbá tí sára berá na mbi só. 8 Na ákótá ní angbá tí báa lo. 9 Na lo kíri encore, mbi descendre tí goe, lo gá na mbi. 10 Na mbi kíri, mbi lóndó na kéké encore. 11 Lo kíri, lo goe, lo dutí. 12 Na ákótá ní aεkε báa lo.

13 Na tongasó mbi tεnε, yí só ayí tí sára tongana yɛ̨. 14 Na mbi gí bέ tí mbi míngi, mbi tεnε, ákótá ní aεkε, mais gí kété kété ní só adú lo fadé fadesó, gεrέ tí lo akpíngba pεpε, mais lo laá asára ngangó na mbi. 15 Tongasó fadé mbi sára tongana yɛ̨. 16 Tongasó mbi kánga bέ tí mbi, mbi tεnε, fadé mbi tara encore lége otá ní. 17 Na mbi goe. 18 Lo gá. 19 Na otá ní só lo yí tí mú mbi bíaní.

Translation

1 The story I want to tell is a buffalo story.

2 One day I prepared my spear well, and I went to the bush to hunt down a buffalo, because I was very hungry for (meat) sauce. 3 When it was ready and I had just set out, I found their tracks. 4 And as I was hunting them, to my surprise, a young one appeared. 5 He came and wanted to fight hard with me.

6 So I climbed a tree and he went back. 7 But he had just been born, he was just a day old, not even two, and here he was picking a fight with me. 8 The big ones just watched him. 9 When he had gone back again, I came down to go away, but he came to me. 10 Once again I climbed back into the tree. 11 He went away again and sat down. 12 And the big ones were watching him.

13 So I said, "How is this thing going to turn out?" 14 And I thought hard and said, "There are big ones, but this very small one who has just been born, whose legs are not even steady, yet he's the one who's giving me a hard time. 15 So what am I going to do?" 16 So I screwed up my courage and said, "I'll try a third time." 17 And I went (down). 18 He came. 19 This third time he really came close to getting me.

Notes

1. *tɛ́nɛ́ tí* -- The narrator apparently is doubling up his expressions, using both *tɛ́nɛ́ só* ... *aɛkɛ tɛ́nɛ́ tí* and *tɛrɛ* 'fable'. It would be better to eliminate *tɛ́nɛ́ tí* altogether; this is what was done for the translation. *tɛrɛ* -- Notice that the tones of this word are different from those in the word *tɛ́rɛ́* 'body'.

2. *lɛkɛ likongó* 'fix spear' -- This is a general expression, for *lɛkɛ* is used of fixing, preparing, arranging anything. *lɛkɛ yángá tí likongó* would mean 'sharpen a spear'.

3. *yí tí* -- Notice the different uses of this expression in sentences 1, 3, 4, and 5. In 1 and 5 there is the meaning 'want'; in 3 there is the meaning 'be about to' do something; with the verb *báa*, as in 4, the meaning is generally 'unexpectedly' or 'to one's surprise'.

5. *berá* -- See Text N57, sentence 1, for comment on this word.

6. *kíri* -- This verb generally means to return to a place away from where one speaks, therefore 'to go back' and not 'come back'.

7. Since the people of the C.A.R. have until very recently had virtually no practical knowledge of cattle, we can asume that this man's guess as to the age of the buffalo is wrong. It is not considered at all cowardly

to run away from a dangerous animal, and a young buffalo is viewed with the same respect as an older one.

10. lóndó -- The translation is free. The man is actually saying that he stood up in the tree. It probably was too small for him to be able to sit on a limb.

19. na -- This is to be translated 'and' and not 'on' (where otá ní would be used substantively).

Questions

1. What did the man do before going hunting?
2. Why did he want to go hunting?
3. What did the buffalo want to do to him?
4. What did the man do when he saw the buffalo?
5. What did the other buffalo do while the small one was at the tree?
6. How many times did the man climb the tree?

Model Sentences

1. Téné só mbi yí tí tɛnɛ aɛkɛ téné tí gógóá (1) 'The story I want to tell is about buffalo'.

2. Nzala tí kása asára mbi míngi (2) 'I am very hungry for meat'.

3. Mbi yí tí goe, mbi wara gɛré tí ála (3) 'I had

just started out when I found their tracks.

4. *Mbi yí tí báa, mbéní kété ní así gígí* (5) 'All of a sudden a small one appeared'.

5. *Lo kíri, lo goe, lo dutí* (14) 'He went back and waited'.

THIRTEEN

When I was a Child (N56)

1 Tɛ́nɛ́ só mbi yí tí fa fadesó aɛkɛ tɛ́nɛ́ só, tongana mbi de mɛ́rɛngɛ́.

2 Tongana mbi de mɛ́rɛngɛ́, ála mú mbi tí sára kusára tí mbéní makunzi. 3 Na tongana mbi ɛkɛ sára kusára, mbéní lá, mbi fatiguer míngi, mbi kę tí goe. 4 Na kapíta tí mɛ́rɛngɛ́ só abata áni agá tí gí mbi.

5 Na tongana mbi húnzi na ndá, na pɛkó tí ta tí mamá, na tongana kapíta só abata áni agá tí gí mbi, na lo éré mbi, Caleb, Caleb. 6 Na mbi tɛnɛ, aɛkɛ zo wa só aéré mbi na gígí. 7 Tí bɛ́ tí mbi atɛnɛ, peut-être aɛkɛ íta tí mbi só mbi na lo í sára ngiá lá kóé laá lo gá tí éré mbi. 8 Na tongasó fadé mbi sára tɛ́nɛ́ sí lo kái. 9 Tɛnɛtí tongana mbi ngbá tí sára tɛ́nɛ́, sí kapíta agá tí má, fadé lo gá tí gbó mbi. 10 Mais andáa aɛkɛ zo só agá tí gbó mbi laá, na mbi hínga pɛpɛ, sí mbi sára tɛ́nɛ́ awe só.

11 Na lo éré mbi mbéní, Caleb, Caleb. 12 Mbi tɛnɛ, mo ɛkɛ zo wa. 13 Mo hínga pɛpɛ só mbi húnzi tí goe na yáká tí tɛ kárákó? 14 Encore mo gá tí gí mbi na tɛ́nɛ́ wala yę.

15 Na tongana lo má tongasó awe, atɛnɛ, mais mbi laá mbi gá tí gbó mo awe apɛ? 16 Na tongana mbi má tongasó, bɛ́ tí mbi aso míngi, mbi tɛnɛ, tɛnɛtí yę mbi sára tɛ́nɛ́.

17 Na tongasó lo mú mbi, agoe na ní na yáká. 18 Na lo goe apíka mbi, atenɛ, tenɛtí yɛ mbi sí gígí na l'appel apɛ. 19 Mbi tenɛ, lá só mbi fatiguer míngi, sí mbi yí tí goe tí tɛ kárákó. 20 Na lo tenɛ, non, mo ɛkɛ zo só mo sára kíríkiri. 21 Na bɛ́ tí mbi asɔ mbi míngi. 22 Mbi tenɛ, tenɛtí yɛ, yí aɛkɛ tongasó na mbi.

23 Na pɛkó ní kété, mbi gí lége tí zía. 24 Mbi gí lége tí zía tí sí gígí l'appel só. 25 Na mbi goe dutí [illegible] kété babá tí mbi só lo ɛkɛ catéchiste.

26 Na tongana mbi goe awe, lo mú mbi tí sára classe. 27 Na tongana lo fa classe na mbi ngú otá, mbi hínga tí díko na yángá tí Kare. 28 Só aɛkɛ syllabaire na yángá tí Kare. 29 Na tongana mbi hínga awe, mbi mú mbɛ́tí tí Sango tí díko séngé. 30 Mbéní zo afa na mbi pɛpɛ.

31 Só aɛkɛ tongana téné só mbi de mérɛngé.

Translation

1 The story I want to tell now is about when I was still a child.

2 When I was still a child, they took me to work for a certain (village) headman. 3 And as I was doing the work, I was tired one day and refused to go (to work). 4 And the overseer of children who supervised us came to look for me.

5 And as I was hiding in the house behind mother's

pots, as the overseer who supervised us came looking for me, he called me, "Caleb, Caleb." 6 I said, "Who's calling me outside?" 7 My thought was that perhaps it was my buddy with whom I always played who had come to call me. 8 If so I would tell him to be quiet. 9 Because if I continued to talk, and the overseer happened to hear, he would come to grab me. 10 But it turned out to be the person who had come to grab me, and I didn't know it and so I had spoken out like that.

11 And he called me again, "Caleb, Caleb." 12 I said, "Who are you? 13 Don't you know that I've hidden to go to the garden to eat peanuts? 14 Or have you come to cause me trouble or what?"

15 And when he heard this, he said, "Isn't it I who have come to grab you?" 16 And when I heard this, I was very angry; "Why did I speak out?"

17 So he grabbed me and took me to the garden. 18 And he went and beat me and asked why I didn't go out for roll call. 19 I said, "Today I was very tired, so I wanted to go to eat peanuts." 20 And he said, "No, you're someone who misbehaves." 21 And I was very angry. 22 I said, "Why are things like this with me?"

23 A little later I sought a way to quit. 24 I sought a way to quit having to go out for roll call. 25 So I went to live with a certain uncle of mine who was a lay preacher.

26 And when I had gone, he put me in school. 27 And when he had taught me for three years, I could read in Kare. 28 That is, the primer in the Kare language. 29 And after I knew how, I took Sango books to read without any trouble. 30 No one taught me.

31 This is like a story about when I was still a child.

Notes

1. téné só -- Followed as it is by a tongana clause, this "relative clause" does not seem to be grammatical. The translation given here is a paraphrase. The use of tongana in 31 is also ungrammatical.

2. mú mbi -- There used to be a great deal of forced labor in one form or another. The village or canton "chiefs" ("chef de village," "chef de canton"; makunzi and canton respectively) were in a sense bureaucrats appointed by the local French administrators. Among their perquisites was free labor conscripted from the villages. Their authority was excercised through the kapíta (sentence 4) 'overseer' who was a kind of policeman without pay. The will of the administration was enforced also through the official legal channels (police department and courts) and the soldiers (Garde Republicaine).

3. tongana -- The context makes it clear that the

incident took place during the time when he was a conscripted laborer.

5. *áni* -- This pronoun and a few other constructions indicate that the narrator is a Protestant. *húnzi* -- Some people confuse this verb, which means 'to finish off', and *hónde* which is the more correct one for 'to hide'.

6. *aɛkɛ zo wa só* -- This is probably not good Sango although it is grammatically correct. An alternative is: *zo wa aéré mbi na gígí zo wa*.

7. *mbi na lo* -- Notice the recapitulation of the coordinate subject in *í*. The use of *laá* here and in 10 is characteristic of Sango. Notice how it reinforces *aɛkɛ*.

9. *gá* -- Notice the two uses of this verb, the first with the meaning 'should happen to' and the second with its literal meaning of 'come'.

10. *mais andáa* -- This is an example of the way French loanwords reinforce Sango connectives, for both of these words have an adversative meaning. *só* -- This sentence-final use of *só* is hard to translate.

13. *só* -- If this word introduced the clause, it would have the meaning 'since', but it is not clear what its function here is. It is probably an error in imitation of the speech of missionaries, because *pɛpɛ* is also misplaced; it is supposed to negate the whole sentence and not just the principal verb. But it would take considerable modification to make this sentence grammatical.

14. *encore* -- This word is used where one expects *mo kíri*. The sense is: 'I have hidden myself, but you turn around and expose me'.

15. *awe* -- The perfective marker is to be taken with *gá* and not *gbé*.

17. *goe na ní* -- This is a typical use of the determinant *ní* after a person has already been identified. Thus, one would not generally say *lo ní mbi agoe na mbi*.

18. *L'appel* 'the roll-call' -- Conscripted labor used to have to appear for daily roll-call.

20. *só* -- In the "relative clause" here and in 25 a pronoun (*mo* and *lo*) is used with the verb instead of the subject marker *a-*. There seems to be no difference in meaning between the two constructions.

24. *sí gíri* -- Notice omission of *na* (cf 18).

FOURTEEN

Deceived by a Woman (N57)

1 Tɛ́nɛ́ só mbi yí tí fa aɛkɛ tɛ́nɛ́ tí berá só asára na babá tí mbi giriri.

2 Na mbéní kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ aɛkɛ só asára berá na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí mbi. 3 Na ázo tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ ní, na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí mbi ní, ála yí tɛ́rɛ́ pɛpɛ.

4 Na mbéní zo tí famille tí í ɔ́kɔ, babá tí mbi, éré tí lo aɛkɛ Rebenzi, lo goe tí sára ndeko na mbéní wále tí kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ ní ká. 5 Na tongana lo goe tí sára awe, kɔ́li tí wále ní afáa kɔ́ndɔ, na alɛkɛ awe, títɛnɛ ahánda na babá tí mbi na ní, sí ála língbi fáa lo.

6 Na tongana babá tí mbi ní agoe tíngbi na lo, lo fa ndo tí bóngbi na lo. 7 Tongana lo goe tí píka gɔzɔ, na kózo ní, lo zía gɔzɔ ní na ngú. 8 Na lo tɛnɛ tongana lá tí píka gɔzɔ ní, fadé lo tí babá tí mbi na place ní.

9 Na tongana lo goe, lo sára tɛ́nɛ́ ní na kɔ́li tí lo, atɛnɛ, mbi wara wato só awe.

10 Na tongana kɔ́li tí lo amá tongasó, lo fáa kɔ́ndɔ ní, na wále ní atɔ́, na lo lɛkɛ kóé.

11 Na tongana lo fa ndo ní na gbɛ́ tí kéké, na tongana lo gá tí sukúla gɔzɔ ní, na kɔ́li tí lo atɛnɛ na áwato tí babá. 12 Na ála gá, ála húnzi na tɛ́rɛ́ tí ndo só lo fa. 13 Na tongana ázo só ahúnzi, na Rebenzi só aɛkɛ babá tí

mbi ahínga apɛ, na ála gá na bozó tí ála. 14 Bozó ní aɛkɛ ngása só ála fáa, na ála lungúla pórɔ́, ála sára na bozó, na ála zía likongɔ́, na yí tí berá tí ála kóé. 15 Na aɛkɛ na tɛ́rɛ́ tí ála ʼvɛní.

16 Na tongana ála gá na wále só, na lo tɛnɛ, kózo ní ála tɛ kɔ́ndɔ só, sí ála língbi bóngbi na tangé ɔ́kɔ. 17 Na tongana babá tí mbí só ayí pɛpɛ, na lo bóngbi kása na kóbe ní, lo zía na bozó. 18 Na tongana lo goe tí toucher wále ní, wále ní asára gí berá, títɛnɛ lo gbó babá ní, sí áwato tí lo alíngbi fáa lo.

19 Na tongasó, tongana áwato tí lo amá dé kɔ́ngɔ́ tí wále, na tongana ála yí tí gá, babá ní alɔ́ndó na likongɔ́ tí lo, na riga tí lo, na zɛmbɛ tí lo. 20 Na tongana lo goe tí fáa mbéní zo ɔ́kɔ, átanga ní kóé awé. 21 Na lo kamáta mbéní zo ɔ́se, lo zía na mbáge tí gali, na zía na mbáge tí koti, na lo kpé lo sí na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́ tí áni ká. 22 Ála zía kótá kóké na gɛrɛ́ tí lo.

23 Na tongasó, tɛ́nɛ́ só agá wángó tí áni, na ámɛngé, títɛnɛ, tongana wále ahánda áni na lége tí sárángó yí tongasó, alíngbi áni báa tɛ́rɛ́ tí áni ʼvɛní kózo ní, áni bóngbi na wále ní.

24 Só aɛkɛ ndá tí tɛ́nɛ́ tí mbi.

Translation

1 The story I went to tell is a story about a fight

in which a paternal relative of mine was involved long ago.

2 There was a village which was on bad terms with my village. 3 The people of that village and of my own village did not like each other.

4 A certain member of our family, my paternal relative whose name was Rebenzi, went to have an affair with a woman of that village. 5 And when he had gone to do this, the husband of the woman killed a chicken and prepared it to trick my relative with it so they could kill him.

6 And when my father went and met her, she showed him where he could make love to her. 7 When she went to pound manioc, first she put the manioc into the water. 8 She said that on the day for pounding the manioc she would meet my relative at the place.

9 When he went away, she told her husband, "I've trapped the enemy."

10 And when her husband heard this, he killed the chicken, and his wife cooked it and fixed it all up.

11 And when she had shown (him) the place under the tree and had come to remove the manioc, her husband told my relative's enemies about it. 12 They came and hid themselves beside the place she had indicated. 13 When these people had hidden and Rebenzi, who was my relative, didn't know about it, they brought their pouches. 14 The pouches were (made of) goats they had killed and skinned and had made into pouches, and they put spears and all of

their weapons in them. 15 These were right at their sides.

16 When (my relative and) the woman came, she said that they should eat the chicken first and then they could go to bed together. 17 When this relative of mine refused, he combined the sauce and the dough together and put them in a pouch. 18 And when he started to fondle the woman, the woman put up a fight so as to grab my relative so his enemies could kill him.

19 At this, when his enemies heard the woman's cries and as they were about to come, my relative arose with his spear and his throwing-knife and his knife. 20 When he went to kill one of the people, the rest ran away. 21 But he caught two of them and putting one on his left side and one on his right side, he ran to our village there. 22 They put big pieces of wood [that is, stocks] on his legs.

23 So this story has become a warning to us and (to) children that when a woman tempts us by doing something like this, we must take care of ourselves first before sleeping with the woman.

24 This is the end of my story.

Notes

1. *berá* -- Although *píka berá* and *sára berá* mean 'wage war' or 'fight in battle', the word *berá* is often

used rather loosely from our point of view. From the point of view of one of the parties, threatening behavior is looked upon as war. Similarly *fáa* 'to kill' is used of fights and of bad language where no one has actually been killed. *fa tɛ́nɛ́* 'to show, to tell' -- Here it means 'to talk about'.

3. *yí tɛ́rɛ́* -- Notice the reflexive use of *tɛ́rɛ́* 'body'.

4. *ɔ́kɔ* 'one' -- Notice the position of the numeral. It would be wrong to have it either after *zɔ* or *famille*; it is in construction with the whole noun phrase. *ndeko* 'friend' -- Some people may still use this for 'friend' in referring to someone of the same sex, but it seems to be used now primarily of a companion in sexual relations, hence the expression *sára ndeko*.

5. *ála* 'they' -- This pronoun refers to the people from the other village.

6. *bóngbi na* 'join up to' -- The verb alone means 'combine' and is used transitively and intransitively.

7. This sentence does not seem to fit between sentences 6 and 8. Perhaps it is a false start. It is not clear exactly what the sequence of events is and whether the time of the soaking of the manioc is at all important. It takes a long time to process manioc; the steps are the following: digging up the tubers, removing the skins with a knife, putting the tubers to soak (in a large basket) in a pond (*zía na ngú*), after about three

days removing the tubers (*sukúla gɔzɔ*) and then spreading them to dry in small pieces, and finally pounding and sifting the dried pieces so as to separate the fibers to make the flour (*píka gɔzɔ*). In telling the man to come back on the day she had to pound the manioc (sentence 8), she had an excuse to be gone from the village for a good part of the day, ample time for the rendezvous they were arranging.

9. *sára tɛ́nɛ́* 'to talk, *sára tɛ́nɛ na* 'to talk with someone', but with the determinant *ní* 'to tell someone something'. *mbi* -- This is reported in direct speech. *Ní* would have been used in indirect speech.

11. *wato* -- This word for enemy and *kamáta* for *mú* (21), *áni* for 'we', indicate that the narrator is probably a Protestant. *babá* -- Kinship terms can be used without a possessive expression (for example, 'my').

12. *ndo só* -- Notice that *ndo* is used with its "basic" meaning of 'place'.

14. *bozó* -- It is not clear what these pouches have to do with the attempted ambush except that they were used to carry some of the weapons. The narrator certainly made a mistake in saying that the spears were inside the pouches. But perhaps the error is ours in not understanding what *zía* 'to put' refers to. By having a new sentence begin *Na ála zía likongó* and ending it with what is now sentence 15, we get something that makes a little more sense,

although *mú* 'take' would be better than *zía*: 'And they placed spears and all of their weapons (by them), and these were at their sides'.

16. *ála* -- The anticipatory plural to indicate both the woman and the man. *Lo gá na wále só* would mean 'He came with (or 'He brought') this woman'.

16. *na tangé* -- For *na ndó tangé* 'on top of a bed'. This is clearly out of place, for there would not even be a mat at that place! Even though *ɔ́kɔ* immediately follows *tangé*, it does not mean 'one bed' but 'together'. Compare: *Ala goe ɔ́kɔ* 'They went together'.

17. *kása* -- This was the chicken sauce or stew to be used with the *kóbe*, the dough. Since this was a clandestine meeting, she would have brought the food with her, hidden in the empty basket in which she would put the flour to be made that day. It would not have have been difficult at all to bring food in this way. It is difficult, however, to understand how the man could put the food into his pouch. In the old days men generally went everywhere with leather pouches slung over their shoulders. Today, they are carried by elderly men, but one sees them uncommonly.

18. *toucher wále* -- This expression has definite sexual connotations. It may be a euphemism, like *bóngbi na* (sentence 6) and *lángó na* for 'to have intercourse with'.

19. *dé kóngó* -- This is an error in imitation of the

speech of missionaries. He might have used toto 'to cry, cry out' or a nominalized form of the expression, namely, déngó kóngɔ́.

20. átanga ní -- Notice that although tanga means 'the rest', the plural is used for individuated plurality.

21. lo kpé lo sí -- The verb sí 'to arrive' is used to indicate that he arrived at his destination, which is not clear in the English 'flee to'. Although kpé na is possible, it has the sense of 'flee in the direction of'. áni -- That is, í.

22. It is not clear who was put in the stocks. Because of the moral of the anecdote (sentence 23), we can assume that it was the man who got into trouble by abducting two of his enemies.

23. agá wángó tí áni -- This seems to be bad Sango for which missionaries are responsible. One does not expect a possessive expression 'our warning' here but rather 'a warning to us', as it was translated. Another Protestantism is alíngbi plus a clause to indicate obligation. One should use instead aεkε tέnέ tí í.

FIFTEEN

Murder of a Lover (N77)

1 Mbénſ kóli ɔ́ko aɛkɛ. 2 Kóli só, lo kamáta wále tſ lo ɔ́kɔ. 3 Babá tſ lo avɔ na lo wále. 4 Tongasó, na pɛkɔ́ nſ, wále nſ agá na yángá da tſ lo awe, na lo kſri tſ goe tſ gſ mbénſ wále tſ ſta tſ lo. 5 Tongasó, na mbénſ famille tſ lo awara lo, atɛnɛ lo, lo sára mbénſ yſ só encore pɛpɛ. 6 Na lo má tɛ́nɛ́ só, lo gá na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́, lo dutſ jusqu'à, lo kú tɛnɛtſ nzɛ ɔ́se. 7 Na lo kſri tſ sára ngiá na wále só encore.

8 Tongasó, tongana kóli nſ amá tɛ́nɛ́ nſ awe, acommencer tſ gſ lo na zɛmbɛ jusqu'à awara lo pɛpɛ. 9 Na lo kpé na Bangui, lo lángó na Bangui jusqu'à dimanche ɔ́se. 10 Lo kſri na kɔ́tɔ́rɔ́. 11 Na ála kſri awara tɛ́rɛ́ na wále só encore na yá tſ ngonda.

12 Tongasó kóli só agoe tſ kánga wótoro, ayſ tſ gá, ála 'vɛnſ aɛkɛ bóngbi só. 13 Na kóli tſ wále só afáa lo, abi lo na sése na kɔ́á.

14 Só atɛnɛ lo sára sionſ awe. 15 Mais lo lſngbi tſ má tɛ́nɛ́ nſ pɛpɛ.

Translation

1 There was a man. 2 This man took a wife (in marriage).

3 His father paid for a wife for him. 4 Later, after the woman had come to live with him (as wife), he turned around and made advances to the wife of one of his relatives. 5 So one of his relatives came to him and told him not to do this again. 6 He listened, then came home where he stayed for two months. 7 Then he resumed being familiar with this woman.

8 When the husband heard of this, he sought a way to knife him, but he did not succeed even after some time. 9 The man fled to Bangui where he stayed for two weeks. 10 He then returned home. 11 Again the man and woman met, (this time) in the bush. 12 It happened that the husband had gone to install his beehives, and as he came, he found none other than the man and woman in union. 13 The woman's husband killed the man and threw him to the ground dead.

14 In other words, the man had done evil. 15 He was not one to listen to advice.

Notes

2. The expressions *kamáta wále* and *mú wále* are synonymous for 'to marry'; *vɔ wále* 'buy woman' refers to the giving of the bride-price, which consists of money and articles of clothing, chickens, goats, utensils, and so on, some of which goes to the girl's parents, but most

of which goes to her male paternal relatives. Among some groups the bride-price is paid exclusively by the paternal relatives, and the young man only works for the future in-laws.

4. *gá na yángá tí da* is the usual expression for indicating when a bride takes up residence with her husband. *gí wále* 'look for woman' is used of young men who are trying to select a bride for themselves or of married men seeking to establish adulterous relations; with the latter sense *gí kɔ́li* also occurs.

5. *atɛnɛ lo* -- After the verb *tɛnɛ* 'say' the connective *na* is often omitted; *mbéní yí só* -- The function of *mbéní* here may be 'like this', that is, 'do anything like this'.

6. *jusqu'à* -- Here it probably is used like *ngbii* 'for a while'.

7. *sára ngiá* -- This expression has a wide range of meaning: 'to play', 'to have a good time', as well as the illicit kind of behavior indicated here.

8. *jusqu'à* -- Here it may again have the meaning 'for a while', but in the next sentence it is used as it is in French.

11. *kíri awara* -- The verb *kíri* is used here with the meaning 'again' or 'resuming where something was left off'. Notice the use of the anticipatory plural: *ála wara tɛ́rɛ́* means 'they meet', but when another person is mentioned, as here with *na wále só* 'with this woman', the

plural pronoun is best translated with a coordinate phrase in English.

12. kánga wótoro 'tie bees' -- This refers to the installation of beehives in trees. They are generally long, made of bark or woven like a basket and then covered. aɛkɛ bóngbi -- After ´vɛní the subject marker a- is used with a verb even though the real subject is a pronoun as ála here.

13. abi lo na sése -- This has been translated rather literally here. The whole clause after fáa lo does little more than dramatize the act of killing. But there are many other expressions in which bi na sése occurs: for example, lo dú mérɛngɛ́ abi lo na sése 'she gave birth to a child.

15. língbi 'to be able' -- The man could not obey or heed counsel, that is, he refused to do so.

Questions

1. When did the man begin to make advances to the other woman?
2. Whose wife was this other woman?
3. What did one of the man's relatives tell him?
4. After two months what did the man begin to do?
5. What did the husband try to do to the man?
6. Where did the man flee to?

7. Where was the husband coming from when he came upon his wife with the man?

Model Sentences

1. Babá tí lo avɔ na lo wále (3) 'His father bought a wife for him'.

2. Lo kíri tí sára ngiá na wále só (7) 'He resumed being familiar with this woman'.

3. Ala wara tɛ́rɛ́ na wále só na yá tí ngonda (11) 'He and the woman met in the bush'.

4. Lo yí tí gá, ála ´vɛní aɛkɛ bóngbi só (12) 'As he came, whom should he meet but them in union'.